



PREPPING HARD

Actor Urvashi Rautela says she is learning martial arts to do justice to her role in an upcoming movie

LEISURE | P2



AUS-FRANCE ROW

Australia has "deep and grave concerns" over a submarine fleet France is building, says PM Scott Morrison

INTERNATIONAL | P10



KOHLI TO STEP DOWN

Virat Kohli has announced that he will quit as RCB captain after this season's IPL

SPORTS | P12

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NEAR BHUBANESWAR AIRPORT

Fake OTET certificate: Three govt school teachers suspended

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: Three government school teachers in Jajpur district were placed under suspension for submitting fake teachers' eligibility test certificates, an official said.

Barachana Block Education Officer (BEO) Harihar Dalei has placed the three teachers - Aniya Kumar Baral of Teligada primary school, Jayanti Sahoo of Akarabad primary school and Raziya Sultana of Charinangal primary school - under suspension for submitting fake Odisha Eligibility Teachers Test (OTET) certificate to get jobs and increments.

"The three teachers have been placed under suspension following the pending of departmental proceedings against them for submission of fake OTET certificates," an official order of the BEO office said.

The District Education Officer (DEO) Ranjan Kumar Giri said that they have filed FIRs against the accused teachers with Barachana police station for legal action.

"We have stopped their salary and started departmental proceedings against them as per the government rule," he said.

An RTI activist Abhimanyu Barik had sought information about the teachers employed in government schools of Barachana, their qualifications and related certificates.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



See, we can vaccinate 2.5 crore people a day! All we need is vax supply!!

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.2°C	31.2°C
MIN	24.4°C	25.5°C
Humidity	100%	100%
Rainfall	34.4mm	26.0mm
Forecast		
Light rain very likely		



LIVING GODDESS: Nepal's revered living goddess Kumari is taken around in a wooden chariot during the annual Indra Jatra festival in Kathmandu, Nepal, Sunday. The feast of Indra Jatra marks the return of the festival season in the Himalayan nation two years after it was scaled down because of the Covid-19 pandemic

PTI PHOTO

Open drain claims boy

Several people have lost their lives in the smart city after falling into open drains as the BMC authorities have done precious little to cover them or put up signages

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: In a tragic incident, a 15-year-old boy was swept away after he accidentally fell into an open drain at Satabdi Nagar Bank Colony near Siripur area while he was on his way to tuition Sunday afternoon.

The Class X student has been identified as Jyoti Prakash Behera of Palamandap area at Barmunda in the city. The victim's family members informed the media that Jyoti left home around 2 pm Sunday for tuition saying that he was going to collect Sanskrit notes from his teacher, who resided at Saubhagya Nagar lane-7. While going through an open field near his teacher's house Jyoti lost balance of his bicycle due to heavy current of rain water and fell into a drain.

Soon, he was washed away by the heavy rain water gushing through the drain. Onlookers, who earlier tried in vain to stop Jyoti from going near the drain, rushed to the spot to rescue him, but could not trace him.

On being informed, Khandagiri police and fire services personnel reached the spot and launched an intensive search operation. However, they failed to trace the boy till last reports came in. His cycle and slippers were re-



Police and Fire personnel search for Jyoti Prakash Behera who went missing after falling into an open drain in the city Sunday afternoon

OP PHOTO



covered by the locals.

The incident occurred despite the locals repeatedly requesting the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) to cover the drain. Local residents claimed that last year a biker had slipped into the same drain but was immediately rescued. It is pertinent to mention here that the state government had issued a checklist to all Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in June instructing them to properly install signages for any open drainage that could

not be repaired, covered or closed.

In a similar in the smart city, a nine-year-old student, Tapan Biswal, of Nayapalli fell into a canal near the Passport Office August 25, 2015 while he was returning home from tuition with his mother. In separate incidents, a teacher and a minor were washed away in 2017 and 2018 respectively after they too fell into different drains in the city. An old lady also fell into an open drain and died in 2019.

Meanwhile, Opposition Congress and BJP condemned the state government and the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation authorities for the tragic incident. Members of the National Students' Union of India, the students' wing of the Indian National Congress, staged a dharna at the site where Jyoti went missing, while the BJP has threatened to initiate legal action against the BMC.

Charanjit Singh Channi to be next Punjab CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Sept 19: The Congress picked Charanjit Singh Channi as the next Chief Minister of Punjab Sunday, a day after Amarinder Singh resigned following a bitter power tussle in the party. Channi, 58, will be the first Dalit to hold the post in the state.

AICC general secretary Harish Rawat said in a tweet, "It gives me immense pleasure to announce that Sh. Charanjit Singh Channi has been unanimously elected as the Leader of the Congress Legislature Party of Punjab."

A minister in the outgoing Amarinder Singh Cabinet, Channi's selection assumes significance as the dissension-riven Congress faces the Assembly polls in less than five months.

The BJP had earlier announced that if voted to power in Punjab, it will make a Dalit the Chief Minister; while the SAD, which is fighting the coming polls in alliance with the BSP, had said that its Deputy Chief Minister would be from the Dalit community.

Channi met the Punjab Governor and staked claim to form government, sources said, adding that Rawat and the party's central observers Ajay Maken and Harish Chaudhary accompanied him.

(More P9)



Engg studies in Odia in state from next year

AICTE has approved conducting engineering classes in four vernacular languages, including Odia, Assamese, Urdu and Punjabi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: From next academic year onwards the engineering colleges in the state will hold classes in Odia language. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has given its approval for this following a meeting between the state government and AICTE September 4.

As per reports, AICTE has approved holding engineering classes in four vernacular languages, including Odia, Assamese, Urdu and Punjabi. As per meeting the AICTE will take care of translation activities with help of Institute of Odia Studies and Research.

Earlier, the members of Institute of Odia Studies and Research met the Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan requesting him to allow teaching engineering subjects in Odia. At present there are 88 private and eight government-run engineering colleges in the state. An estimated 30,000 to 35,000 students take admission in these engineering colleges every year, while more than

10,000 seats remain vacant

Talking to **Orissa POST**, Odisha Private Engineering College Association secretary Binod Dash said that the move will encourage many students to take up engineering studies. It will also help in filling up the large number of seats that lie vacant in the engineering colleges in the state every year, he said. "Students who are not very proficient in English will now opt for engineering courses. Students from rural areas especially of tribal area will benefit from this," said Dash.

According to Dash, many countries such as Japan, China, France and Russia impart higher education, including engineering and medical, in their native languages instead of English.

Another meeting will be held between AICTE and Odisha government on the issue is scheduled for September 25, 2021. Earlier this year, engineering colleges affiliated to the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) were allowed to offer courses in regional languages from the 2021-22 academic session.

The move is part of the Modi government's push to facilitate education in one's mother tongue, and is being advocated under the new National Education Policy. In November 2020, the Ministry of Education (MoE) had cleared a proposal, allowing colleges to offer engineering education in mother tongue.

Star campaigners set to hit road in Pipli today

As the date for Pipli Assembly by-election draws close, all parties are putting their best foot to wrest the seat following the demise of BJD MLA Pradeep Maharathi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: The campaign for the upcoming Pipli Assembly by-elections is set to receive impetus with the star campaigners of the leading political parties set to join the electioneering bandwagon Monday.

BJD workers Sunday held a series of meetings to boost their party's prospects in the polls. Party candidate Rudra Pratap Maharathi said that the party is confident of winning the seat by a good margin.

"We have conducted ward-level meetings with the party leaders and grassroots workers in the constituency and made strategies on how to reach out to the people of the constituency for the coming

election. I am confident that the BJD will win the by-poll," he said.

The party has, meanwhile, listed the names of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and several senior party leaders, including the local MLAs and MP, to campaign for the candidate in the area.

The Congress party also held a meeting here Sunday to chalk out modalities to reach out to the electorate. The party had earlier issued a list of 20 leaders led by the Odisha Congress in-charge A Chella Kumar, who are all set campaign for the party candidate.

After the meeting, Congress leader Chiranjib Biswal said, "Today we held a meeting in Bhubaneswar to discuss ways and means to win the by-election. At the panchayat-level our workers have formed coordination committees. A Chellakumar will also be here September 22."

The BJP, meanwhile, claimed that work is in full swing to woo the electorate and seek votes for their candidate Ashrit Pattanayak. Party leader Smriti Patnaik said, "We vowed to ensure the victory of our party. We will ask the women to vote for us to improve their lot," she said.

FORCED LABOUR, CYBER CRIMES UP IN ODISHA

The state witnessed the highest number of people trafficked for forced labour in 2020, while cyber crimes shot up by 30% amid Covid-induced lockdown

PRESS TRUST INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: The highest number of victims who were trafficked for forced labour last year was from Odisha, which also saw cyber crimes shoot up by a whopping 30 per cent amid the coronavirus lockdown, according to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report.

The state registered one of the highest rates of murders and attempts to murder in the country, as well as the biggest crime rate per lakh population in cases of hit and run, dacoity and

criminal intimidation, the NCRB said in its latest report.

The rate of cyber crimes was 4.2 per lakh population in the state, higher than the national rate of 3.7, according to the 'Crime in India 2020' report that was published Tuesday.

The state reported 1,931 cyber crimes in 2020, an increase of 30.03 per cent from 1,485 in the previous year and staggering 129 per cent from 843 in 2018, the report stated.

Odisha is the third highest in the country with 524 cases of publication and transmission of obscene or sexually-explicit acts in an electronic form. With 220 cases, it recorded the highest incidents of defamation, morphing and indecent representation of women.

The state is in the fourth position in the number of cyber frauds with 1,079 cases, including 132 credit or debit card fraud and 549 online banking scams. A total of 369 people were arrested for cyber crimes.



There were 103 cases of human trafficking, a 29.93 per cent reduction from 147 incidents in 2019. However, the number of victims who were trafficked stood at 741, including 287 women and 159 children, the second highest in the country.

It topped the list in the number of people above 18 years who were victims of trafficking, the NCRB said.

As many as 653 people were trafficked for the purpose of forced labour; the highest among all the states and Union Territories. It is 44.97 per cent

of the total victims who were trafficked for forced labour in the country last year.

A total of 764 people, including 280 women, were rescued in 2020, while 189 suspects were arrested on charges of human trafficking.

According to the NCRB, 1,470 people were murdered in the state with a rate of 3.2 per lakh population, the fourth highest in the country. The state reported 4,135 incidents of attempts to murder with a rate of 9.1 per lakh population, the third highest in the country.

There were 307 incidents of dacoity involving 321 victims with the biggest rate of 0.7 in the nation. It is second after Delhi in robberies, registering a 4.8 crime rate per lakh population with 2,162 cases.

Moreover, 1,179 cases were registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, of which 1,031 incidents were for possession of drugs for trafficking.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today, you want to do something for the environment. Ganesha says plant a tree, clean up your neighbourhood, ask for a paper bag. You wish to lead the world into a better place? Do it by all means, but one step at a time.

TAURUS

You may feel suspicious about the people around you, feels Ganesha. You are also likely to emerge victorious in visa matters. You will take time to let your loved ones know how much you care for them. Have a positive attitude and it will win many hearts for you, advises Ganesha.

GEMINI

You are likely to take a break from daily routine. A pleasure trip to recharge your batteries is on the charts, predicts Ganesha. Winning favours from members of the opposite sex comes naturally to you. If you love someone, you will make your move today.

CANCER

Ganesha portends that you will remain invincible and unbeatable throughout the day. However, today will be as boring and uneventful as it gets. It will be just another day at office, and an equally simple day at home. There will not be any low points, but no high points either.

LEO

Love, respect and quality time together – this might just be the perfect recipe for a happy family life, says Ganesha. So on this day, make it a point to spend time with your loved ones, and show them just how much you care for them and what they mean to you.

VIRGO

Pay due attention to your innate feelings. A small tour may be in the offing. You will get along famously with people today, says Ganesha. Your loved ones will receive your sincere feelings and emotions. Work your magic to improve relationships more.

LIBRA

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy! You don't want to be Jack, now, do you? It's high time you took a break from your busy work schedule. Go on a vacation to recharge your batteries. There are chances that evening could bring with it some hurtful remarks from loves ones.

SCORPIO

You are likely to get overboard with your ambitions and be loud-mouthed, says Ganesha. But do not to be too forceful or severe lest you end up tarnishing your image. It is best to stay clear of conflicts in the larger scheme of things, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Wisdom in words and hero in deeds – this may well be your avatar today. Expect good news at work, especially related to a thicker pay package or an increase in office floor area. Accountants and franchisees – expect to crunch good numbers today!

CAPRICORN

The wait for some good news may have been too long, but it will surely find its way to you today, says Ganesha. Your focus will remain fixed on work, and you may feel like you are finally starting to like your job. This, in turn, will lead you to take some well-informed decisions about your future.

AQUARIUS

You may find your schedules running haywire today! Your workload may be daunting, especially if you're an administrator. However, Ganesha says your diligence and commitment will tide you through. And you are still ready to party in the evening. What energy!

PISCES

Your business associates will marvel at your business acumen, and will respect the insights you provide for them to work with. Meanwhile, you will be busy spending quality time with your family and showing them how much they mean to you today, says Ganesha.



CRAIG GETS EMOTIONAL ON LAST DAY SHOOT OF BOND

Hollywood star Daniel Craig says playing James Bond was “one of the greatest honours” of his life, as he was filmed getting emotional on his last day in the iconic role. Craig played the spy in five James Bond films and the last one is set to be released later this month.

BILLIE EILISH GETS EMOTIONAL ON THE DREW BARRYMORE SHOW

Singer Billie Eilish opened up about a personal moment in a virtual appearance on *The Drew Barrymore Show*, reports *Billboard.com*. She told Barrymore, she had tears in her eyes after she re-watched her documentary *Billie Eilish: The World's a Little Blurry*.



Maera excited to play a grey role

Mumbai: Popular actress Maera Misra has entered the daily soap *Bhagya Lakshmi* as the woman in Rishi's life. Her character Mallishka has shades of grey. Maera is essaying the role of Mallishka Singh Bedi, who is the daughter of a big magazine publisher. While till now, everyone thought that she is just Rishi's friend, but Mallishka is actually the one Rishi loves.

Talking about the same, Maera said: “When I was offered a role in *Bhagya Lakshmi*, I was very excited, especially because it is a Balaji show that airs on Zee TV. I am excited to play a grey character. I feel grey characters give me a great opportunity to explore and enhance my acting skills.”

“I am nothing like Mallishka, so it is a challenge in itself. I hope everyone supports me and showers me with love and blessings like always,” the actress added.

ANS



Urvashi in action mode

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela is learning martial arts for her upcoming film. She says she is prepping hard for her role and added that martial arts is fun.

“I love the idea of prepping hard for my action film and having to fight and learn a new skill set, whether it's Muay Thai, Kali, Filipino stick fighting or Bojutsu. To me, it's like school for life,” Urvashi said.

The actress added: “Martial arts is fun, it's all choreographed a bit like dance. Which is cool because it's very fluid with the big kicks and flips and showier aspects of martial arts.”

The actress did not share details about her upcoming action film. Urvashi will next be seen in the web series *Inspector Avinash*. The series is based on the life of Inspector Mishra and has Randeep Hooda essaying the title role.

She will also be seen in the Telugu movie *Black Rose*, directed by Hemant N Mishra.

ANS

‘I never love in instalments’

New Delhi: Actress Radhika Madan, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming romantic film *Shiddat*, has talked about her own love life. She says she does not love in instalments.

In a candid chat, Radhika said: “*Mujhe hamesha Shiddat wala pyaar hi hota hai* (I always get into serious love). It is either zero or hundred. There is no in-between.”

She added: “*Kishton wala pyaar mere main hai hi nahi. Naap tol ke main pyaar kar hi nahi sakti.* (I never fall in love in instalments.)”

Radhika started her career in acting

with television show *Meri Aashiqui Tum Se Hi* in 2014. She then made a transition to the big screen in 2018 with *Pataakha*. Her performances in the Irrfan Khan-starrer *Angrezi Medium* and web series *Ray* were praised by the audience and critics alike.

The 26-year-old actress aims to grow with every character she plays on screen.

“I just try to play the character with full honesty and I just try to give my 200 per cent into every character. I just want to give my all to every character,” she said.

ANS



Belfast bags People's Choice Award at TIFF

OTHER NOTABLE FILMS WHICH WON THE TIFF TOP AWARD AND THEN WENT ON TO WIN THE OSCAR ARE SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE, GREEN BOOK, 12 YEARS A SLAVE AND THE KING'S SPEECH AND LAST YEAR'S NOMADLAND

The Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), which sets the tone for the Oscar season, picked British actor-director Kenneth Branagh's family drama *Belfast* for the People's Choice Award Saturday.

The road drama *Nomadland*, which won the best-picture Oscar this year, was also the winner of the People's Choice Award at the Toronto film festival last year.

Other notable films which won the TIFF top award and then went on to win the Oscar are *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Green Book*, *12 Years a Slave* and *The King's Speech*.

Set in the late 1960s' Northern Ireland wracked by sectarian violence, the black-and-white *Belfast* is Branagh's 'most personal' film as he spent his childhood in the city of Belfast. This family drama captures the coming-of-age story of Buddy (played by Jude Hill), trying to escape the violence and his working-class life.

Accepting the award, Branagh said he was 'deeply grateful' for the honour. “That so many film lovers



connected with Belfast so profoundly was absolutely overwhelming to myself and Jamie Dornan, and we talked about it long into a memorable night of laughter and tears in your great city,” he said.

The British filmmaker said, “Our first showing of *Belfast* at TIFF was one of the most memorable experiences of my entire career.”

The Canadian family drama

Scarborough and Jane Campion's western *The Power of the Dog*, with Benedict Cumberbatch in the lead role were the two runners-up.

Nithin Lukose's Malayalam film *Paka* (River of Blood), Ritwik Pareek's *Dud Dug* and Payal Kapadia's *A Night of Knowing Nothing* also premiered at the 46th TIFF. The 10-day film festival ends Sunday.

ANS

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

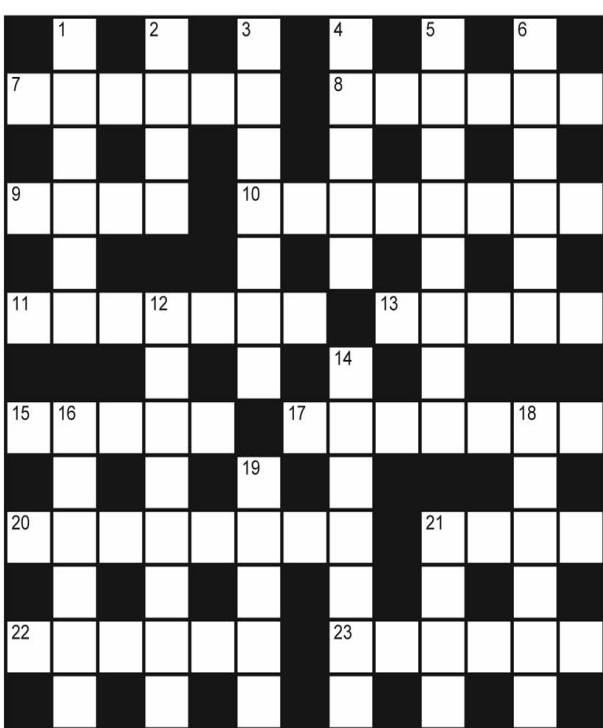


BREVITY



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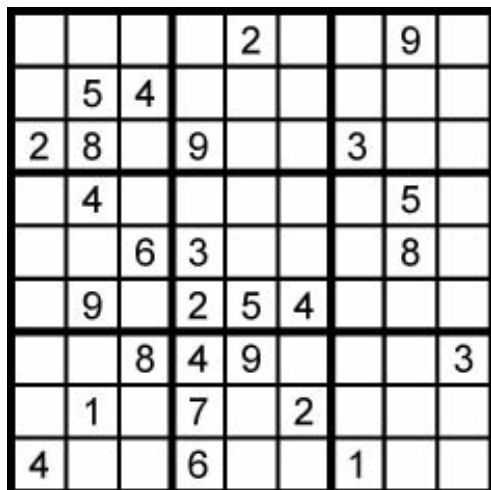


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- Across**
- 7 Come back
 - 8 Mason's tool
 - 9 Spellbound
 - 10 Sandwich filler (4,4)
 - 11 Exasperating
 - 13 Cavalry sword
 - 15 Savory jelly
 - 17 On the fence
 - 20 Poured
 - 21 Heroic tale
 - 22 Evil
 - 23 Peers
 - Down**
 - 1 Account book
 - 2 Hierarchy level
 - 3 Pre-med course
 - 4 Backgammon piece
 - 5 Puffy hairdo
 - 6 It blows off steam
 - 12 Kandy locale (3,5)
 - 14 Saltwater lake between Israel and Jordan (4,3)
 - 16 Picturesque
 - 18 Sock pattern
 - 19 Reading room
 - 21 Give the cold shoulder

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

downtown

Waterlogging, dengue plague City residents

According to sources in the BMC, though the civic authority de-silts the clogged drains ahead of monsoon every year, this year it cleaned only 383 km of the total 625 km drainage system in and around the City till August

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: It is a double whammy for Bhubaneswar, which is already under duress due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While the capital City is witnessing the highest rainfall in 60 years, the number of dengue cases too is the highest in five years, thanks to the negligence of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). While waterlogging has become the order of the day, experts suggest a possible co-relation between the alarming rise in dengue cases this year and stagnant water. The state capital registered more than 2,300 dengue cases in 2021, surpassing the total tally of the entire state in 2020. Bhubaneswar, which accounts for more than 90 per cent of the dengue cases in the state currently, saw the disease spread to every ward with the civic authority miserably failing in checking the crisis. “Dengue is largely a vector-borne



Garbage litters the Unit-I vegetable market in the Capital City

MeT: More rain in store for 3 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday warned of heavy rains in different parts of the state for three days starting Monday. The MeT department said the cyclonic circulation over Bay of Bengal is likely to move towards Odisha in the early hours of Monday. “The cyclonic circulation over northwest and adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal extending up to 5.8 km above the mean sea level is very likely to move towards Odisha coasts during the next 12 hours,” the department said in its evening bulletin. As per the forecast, as many as 12 districts of Odisha may witness heavy rainfall Monday. The remaining districts are very likely to see light to moderate rains on the day. “Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Puri, Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Sundargarh,” said the MeT department in its weather warning for Monday. According to the MeT department, several districts including Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sonepur, Nuapada, Bolangir and Deogarh are likely to witness heavy rainfall, Tuesday. Similarly, heavy rain may lash districts like Nabarangpur, Nuapada and Bolangir, Wednesday, said the IMD weather report. As per the IMD prediction, the Capital city of Bhubaneswar may witness partly cloudy sky with the possibility of moderate rain or thundershowers, Monday.



Vehicles ply on the waterlogged Bomikhal-Rasulgarh road in Bhubaneswar soon after heavy rain lashed the City, Sunday

disease. The carrier of dengue, Aedes Aegypti, breeds in places where there is stagnant water. This could be tyres, mud-pots, or any discarded item where water can accumulate. If proper sanitation is not maintained, and waterlogging is constant in any area, the risk of vector and water-borne diseases increases greatly,” said Dr Smita Rao, a City-based entomologist. According to sources in the BMC, though the civic authority de-silts the clogged drains ahead of the monsoon every year, this year it cleaned only 383 km of the total 625 km of drainage system in and around the City till August. There are 10 major storm water channels extending to 65.82 km that carry rain water from the City to Gangua Nullah. A network of 560 km-long drains, spread in different



SPEEDY JUSTICE

A Lok Adalat being held at Puri District and Sessions Judge Court, Sunday

Man jumps to death from Bharatia Tower

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 19: A 40-year-old man Sunday committed suicide by jumping off the Bharatia Tower at Badambadi here, police said. The deceased was identified as Damodar Bal of Kumbhar Sahi under Purighat police limits in the city. Bal jumped off the third floor of Bharatia Tower in the afternoon and died on the spot, police said. Sources, meanwhile, claimed that Bal was suffering from mental ailments for last several days. “Bal was under treatment for his illness. He had jumped off the roof of his house Sunday morning but survived. His family members tried to confine him to a room but he managed to escape,” said a source. The police seized the body and sent it for postmortem after registering an unnatural death case.

OREAT gets permanent office in City

The court and office of the Odisha Real Estate Appellate Tribunal will start functioning at Toshali Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, its permanent office, September 27

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: The Odisha Real Estate Appellate Tribunal (OREAT), Bhubaneswar, launched its permanent office at Toshali Bhawan here Sunday. The permanent office was inaugurated by Justice Vineet Saran, Judge at the Supreme Court of India, in the presence of Justice S Muralidhar, Chief Justice, Orissa High Court and Justice SC Parija, Chairperson, Odisha Real Estate Appellate Tribunal.

The H&UD department has provided all the administrative, financial and logistic support for renovation and interior work of the office

The dignitaries from the state government and Orissa High Court attending the inaugural ceremony included Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Principal Secretary G Mathi Vathanan, Law department Principal Secretary Radha Krishna Pattanaik, Finance department Principal Secretary Vishal Dev, Principal Secretary of Works department-cum-CMD, IDCO



Supreme Court Justice Vineet Saran, Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Odisha Real Estate Appellate Tribunal Chairperson Justice SC Parija at the event in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Krishan Kumar, Culture department Commissioner-cum-Secretary Suresh Chandra Dalei, BMC Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Singh, Panchayatiraj & Drinking Water department Principal Secretary Ashok K Meena, IDCO Executive Director Bhupendra Singh Poonia, Orissa High Court Registrar General Chitaranjan Dash, Advocate General Ashok Parija, and Commissioner of police

Soumendra Priyadarshi. The H&UD, through its Odisha Urban Housing Missions (OUHM), Bhubaneswar, has expeditiously provided all the administrative, financial and logistic support for renovation and interior work of the office and the work was swiftly executed by Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO), Bhubaneswar, in spite of the lockdown and shutdown

restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic. The court and office of the tribunal will start functioning in its permanent office from September 27. The litigants, advocates, general public and the government & non-government authorities would make correspondence when required at A-1 Block, 7th Floor, Toshali Bhawan, Satyanagar, Bhubaneswar, from September 27.

Treasure hunt at Emar Mutt for lost hoard

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, Sept 19: A treasure hunt has started at the Emar Mutt, located in the southeastern corner of Srimandir, with teams of archaeologists armed with metal detectors searching for a lost hoard. The search started Thursday following a request by Narayan Ramanuj Das, the Mahanta (pontiff) of Uttarparshwa Mutt, who is in charge of Emar Mutt. The mutt authorities as well as historians suspect that a hoard of valuables is buried inside the premises. The belief that a stash is buried underground comes from discoveries of two earlier troves. In 2011, the police had stumbled upon a treasure trove of 522 silver ingots weighing around 18 tonne inside the mutt worth about Rs 90 crore. Earlier in April this year, 45 more silver ingots weighing about 35 kg each were found inside the mutt. Apart from the silver ingots, a silver tree and silver flowers, about 16 antique swords, and a bronze cow sculpture were also recovered from the mutt, established by Ramanujacharya during his visit to Puri in 1050. A special team of the state Archaeology department in presence of officials of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), Puri district Collector Samarth Verma, SP KV Singh and trust members of the Emar mutt, began the search inside the mutt premises Thursday to trace hidden valuables. Puri Sub-Collector Bhabatara Sahu said, “As of now, no material was detected during the inspection. We will take appropriate action on the report of the



The recent survey at Emar Mutt near Srimandir in Puri

technical team which scanned the premises.” The treasures recovered earlier from the mutt are now kept in the district treasury in Puri and guarded by armed police. As many as 18 mutts belonging to Ramanuja sect was established in Puri by Ramanujacharya. All these mutts are closely linked to Srimandir and are involved in rituals associated with the Temple. Govindacharya or Govinda Jeeyar was the first pontiff of this mutt. Govindacharya was given the name Emperumannar, which means ‘My Lord’ in Tamil. However,

a section of disciples opposed the name and finally changed this to ‘Emar’. Govindacharya was Ramanujacharya’s cousin brother. The mutt worships Lord Rama, Devi Sita and Laxman. The mutt’s hidden treasury, came to the lime-light ten years back when two masons involved in its renovation work were caught by Dhenkanal Police while they were trying to dispose of two silver ingots weighing over 30 kg each. During interrogation, the duo revealed that they had stolen the valuables from Emar mutt. This confession led to the discovery of a room stashed

with silver ingots. Former pontiff of Emar mutt, Rajgopal Das, had claimed ownership over the property and filed a case in the High Court seeking direction to the police to hand it over to him. The ingots were then shifted from Emar mutt to the armory of the district reserve police. The Endowment Commissioner had constituted a trust to manage the affairs of the mutt. Since Das did not cooperate with the trust, the administration forcefully entered the mutt and he was stripped of all his powers.

The metal detector search has indicated something. But, we cannot say whether they are valuable metals or iron or some other metals. As metal detectors could detect materials up to just 1.5 feet to 2 feet under the earth, we now need a better survey which could detect metals at a greater depth

NARAYAN RAMANUJ DAS | EMAR MUTT TRUST BOARD CHIEF

A four-member trust headed by Narayan Ramanuj Das, who is the pontiff of Utter Parsva Mutt, had taken over Emar mutt, and the inventory of all the valuables was made in the presence of a magistrate. “The metal detector search has indicated something. But, we cannot say whether they are valuable metals or iron or some other metals. As metal detectors could detect materials up to just 1.5 feet to 2 feet under the earth, we now need a better survey which could detect metals at a greater depth,” said Das. However, Das expressed ignorance regarding a rumoured store of gold and diamonds in the mutt. “How can I make such claims? We have seen silver ingots so far. Who knows whether there is gold or diamond hidden in the mutt,” he said. About the existence of such huge volume of silver ingots in Emar mutt, historian Anil Dhir said “During my research on the Great Orissa Famine of 1866 (Na’Anka Durbhikshya), I had got conclusive evidence that the silver ingot was part of the payment made by

the British authorities to various mutts for rice purchased from them during famine years.” Emar Mutt was among the biggest landowners of the period and had overflowing granaries, he said, adding that when the British administration wanted to buy the stocks for relief kitchens, the mutt heads had demanded payment in bullion. “I have found various documents which confirm that the mutts were selling a major part of their stocks for the relief kitchens that had been set up by the authorities. This treasure is the legitimate property of the mutt,” Dhir claimed. The historian also claimed that Emar Mutt was the fountainhead of many smaller mutts. Among the branches in different places, the Emar Mutts at Sakhigopal and in the Old Town area of Bhubaneswar stand apart due to their historical importance. “There should be proper surveys in both these places for buried treasures. There is every chance that silver ingots may also be buried in Sakhigopal and Bhubaneswar mutts,” Dhir said. Meanwhile, the Emar Mutt in Puri including the famed Raghunandan Library, spread over five acre of land, has been demolished as part of the beautification drive of the Pilgrim City. “We have been left with the sanctum sanctorum of the mutt and 10 rooms after demolition. There were 200 rooms in the mutt premises earlier. Many shops constructed on the Mutt property are encroached and there is no such source of income to run the daily affairs. We urge the government to restore mutt property,” Das said.

95 children, adolescents among 623 fresh cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: Coronavirus infection among children and adolescents continued to rise in Odisha with 95 of them diagnosed with the infection of the 623 fresh cases detected Sunday, a Health official said.

The rate of infection among children and adolescents stands at 15.24 per cent. It was 11.9 per cent Saturday, the official said. However, single-day recoveries outnumbered fresh cases in the state as 756 more people recuperated from the disease in the last 24 hours.

The coastal state has so far reported 10.20 lakh Covid-19 cases. Khurda reported the highest number of new cases at 272, followed by Cuttack (74), and Jagatsinghpur (29). Four districts-Boudh, Bolangir, Malkangiri and Nuapada - did not report any new case. Khurda is the only district of Odisha that currently has more than 2500 active cases, thus marked red zone.

Seven more Covid-19 patients



COVID STATS

Seven more Covid-19 patients died in the state in the last 24 hours, taking the toll to 8,135

Khurda is the only district in state that currently has more than 2,500 active cases, thus marked red zone

There are a total of 5,736 active cases in the state at present, while 10,06,320 patients have recovered from the highly infectious disease

The state has thus far tested over 1.92 crore samples for Covid-19, including 62,917 Saturday

died in the state in the last 24 hours, taking the toll to 8,135. Khurda, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur districts reported two deaths each, while one death was reported from Jajpur.

As many as 53 coronavirus patients have died in Odisha due to other ailments so far, the official added.

There are a total of 5,736 active

cases in the state at present, while 10,06,320 patients have recovered from the highly infectious disease. The state has thus far tested over 1.92 crore samples for Covid-19, including 62,917 Saturday.

As many as 71,59,276 people have been fully inoculated till September 18, the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department informed.

UPHOLDING TRADITION



Girls offer puja to Goddess Khudurukuni at Tiadisahi in Puri, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Covid norms, vax key to fight pandemic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: The UNICEF Odisha in collaboration with the Health department and the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Bhubaneswar organised a virtual media sensitisation programme on Covid-19 pandemic and vaccination in Kalahandi and Nuapada districts recently.

The sensitisation programme emphasised on the need to create awareness on Covid appropriate behaviour and encourage more people to take the vaccination. The programme highlighted the role of media during the pandemic.

Additional Director General of PIB and Regional Outreach Bureau (ROB), Bhubaneswar, Rajinder Choudhry said, "In a diverse country like India particularly in Odisha, it is difficult to reach out to the grass root level due to network and transport issues. Therefore, we need to deploy a combination of mechanisms including mass communication and interpersonal communication to reach out the vulnerable masses."

Speaking on the importance of



vaccine, he further said, "Many countries across the globe are now going through the third wave of the pandemic, but it should be noted that the hospitalisation and death rate is still minimal due to vast coverage of vaccination among the people. While the vaccination rates in India are commendable, we need to keep our focus on vaccinating more people to achieve herd immunity against the deadly virus."

Speaking on the impact of Covid-19, Anil Patnaik of UNICEF Odisha stated, "People with comorbidities and immunity deficiency and senior citizens are vulnerable to Covid infections. Only 5 per cent people are severely infected by the virus due to weak immune system."

Throwing light on the safety and efficacy of vaccine, Child Health Manager for routine immunisation of the Health depart-

ment Sashi Bhushan Panda said, "No vaccine gets approval overnight. It takes many stages of examination before granting approval to a vaccine. The Covid vaccines available in India have also gone through all required process and testing."

Highlighting the success of vaccination drive in Nuapada, Assistant District Public Health Officer (ADPHO) Binod Bihari Rath said, "Till date, around 78 per cent of the total eligible population that is 2,00,231 people in Nuapada have been successfully vaccinated against the virus, out of which only two cases were found with adverse impact. We have successfully vaccinated 2,384 pregnant women out of the total 7,360 in the district. The vaccines are showing positive results."

Koraput ADPHO Nilamadhav Satpathy said, "All vaccines approved by the government have high efficacy rate. The average efficacy rate of all vaccines including Covaxin and Covishield and others is around 75 per cent. So, without hesitation people should come forward to take both doses of the vaccines."

Edukemy comes home, begins journey in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: Edukemy, India's best test preparation platform is now in Odisha. With its unique pedagogy, structured classes, curated content and dedicated platform for evaluation of subjective answers 'Korrecto', the company has made its mark in the test preparation arena in the country. It has been recognised as the best test prep solution of the year 2021 at the Indian Education Awards.

Since its inception, Edukemy is gaining great traction with 1.9 times growth in number of courses, a 3 time increase in viewership, and doubled engagement rates in classes due to interactive and effective learning methods. It has gained the trust of around 2,50,000 aspirants in the form of active subscriber base and is currently training more than 12,000 aspirants to achieve their dreams and succeed in life.

When asked about the vision of starting courses in OPSC, CEO Chandrabhas Panigrahi said, "I have a belief that if you educate a child, you do not just empower one person but the complete family. As someone

who was born and raised in Odisha, I have a natural desire to expand in Odisha and contribute to the development of the state. We are deeply committed to increasing Odisha's representation in the Civil Services on a national scale and empower the state's legacy."

The three founders—Chandrabhas Panigrahi (CEO), Shabbir A Bashir (CAO), and Deb Tripathi (CTO), were all born and raised in Odisha, and with a common mission to develop their state. Along with tech-based evaluation, Edukemy focuses on providing affordable learning to the community's students and has been thriving in executing the business model to effectively train aspirants.



Coffee cultivation transforming lives of Koraput tribals

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: Coffee farming is transforming the lives of the tribal population of Odisha's Koraput, which is considered as one of the most backward districts in India.

Koraput, which is located in the Eastern Ghats at a height of 3,000 feet above sea level, is ideal for coffee cultivation due to its cool climate and rainfall. Koraput coffee is a unique blend, consisting of 100 per cent Arabica coffee.

As opposed to the Robusta variety of the beverage which is acidic, Arabica coffee, growing in the shade of trees, has a host of salutary benefits, inducing people to switch to the latter. The coffee raised in Koraput is also of export quality.

Coffee plantation was first introduced in Koraput by the erstwhile Maharaja of Jeypore, Rajbahadur Rama Chandra Deo, in the 1930s. However, after the abolition of the zamindari system in 1951, the state soil conservation department undertook coffee plantation to prevent siltation in the Machkund basin in 1958.

Now, coffee cultivation, with the support of the state government and the Coffee Board of India under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has brought smiles to the faces of the tribal people of the district with the organic Koraput coffee emerging as a brand name. It is mostly cultivated by tribals in the district.

According to official sources, coffee cultivation has taken up over 2,000 hectare of land in eight blocks of the district and about 1,100 metric tonne (MT) of coffee has been produced in the last crop season (2020-21). The tribal population in Semiliguda, Dasmantpur, Laxmipur, Lamtaput, Nandapur, Koraput, Baipariguda and Pottangi blocks is engaged in the coffee farming.

Over a period of more than 15 years, Rajendra Hantal, a tribal man from Kasampadar village in Nandapur block, has become a successful coffee farmer of Koraput region.

"Before entering into coffee cultivation, I was doing traditional farming like paddy crop, green gram, and a few vegetable crops in my field. At that time, I was unable to meet the expectations of my family. But now, I am earning between ₹1.20 lakh to ₹1.60 lakh per annum from the coffee cultivation on nearly 2 acre of land," said Rajendra.

Rajendra not only grows coffee in his own land, but also enlists other tribal people of his community to do so.

Gajendra Dami, a tribal coffee farmer from Kendriguda village in Laxmipur block of the district, said his life has changed after engaging in coffee farming.

"I have been engaged in coffee farming for more than a decade. The government has provided land to us. I have a small coffee farm and earn around ₹30,000 a year as the



trees are yet to fully grow," said Dami. Once the coffee trees have matured, the annual profit will touch nearly ₹1 lakh, he said.

Apart from coffee, Gajendra is also cultivating black pepper, which is suitable to grow in the same climate. "I am also getting a hand-

some amount of money from the black pepper crop," he said.

Not only Gajendra, but also about 40 other families of his village are now living happily after taking to coffee farming.

The state government had provided forest land rights of 46,000

acre of land to 30,000 families till June 2021. Many of the tribal families are using the FRA lands for cultivating coffee.

Through its Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation of Odisha Limited (TDCCOL) and Koraput Agro Products Producer Company Limited (KAPPCO), a producer company of the Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society, the government is providing support to the coffee farmers, an official said.

TDCCOL alone has procured 28,790 kilogram of coffee beans from 193 tribal coffee growers in the district in 2020-21. The state is procuring the dry parchment at a rate of ₹35 per kilogram from the farmers. It has a processing unit at Sunabeda in the district where the final product is being prepared.

Green coffee beans procured from the farmers are subject to curing and roasting at this unit before they hit the markets. Aided by branding efforts and the buyback arrangement with the farmers, the TDCCOL is expected to contribute 500 tonne in coffee output this year, sources said.

In September 2019, the Odisha government had launched coffee beans under the brand 'Koraput Coffee', and it has already carved a niche for itself both within and outside the state for its taste and quality.

The TDCCOL is not only promoting the brand but also selling the product in Adisha stores in

the state and through e-commerce websites Amazon and its own Adisha.in, said Mansi Nimbal, managing director of the corporation.

The coffee is priced at ₹120 for a 100 gram packet and ₹299 for 250 gram. The quality of the coffee is so good that it has transformed into a very big brand.

"The state government is taking steps for the promotion of Koraput Coffee. We directly procure the coffee fruits/beans from farmers, so there is no role of any middleman. We pay the amount to the farmers through DBT," she said.

Recently, Tata has shown interest in buying Koraput Coffee and selling it under its brand name. TDCCOL will facilitate the company in this, Mansi said.

The Coffee Board of India also has a coffee farm and office in Koraput since 1978 and it is providing technical support like training, capacity building along with a few incentives to the coffee farmers, said Senior Liaison Officer (SLO) of the board, Upendra Kumar Saha.

He said the Coffee Board of India has 26 acre of coffee farm, where 6.5 MT of coffee, at an average, is being cultivated each year. Apart from providing necessary training to the farmers, the Coffee Board of India is distributing post-matric fellowship to the children of coffee farmers and workers, Saha said. The Coffee Board of India also promotes entrepreneurship in coffee farming in the region, he added.

5 HELD AS BAR GETS SQUAD STUCK IN LIFT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: In a bizarre incident, the Covid-19 joint enforcement squad officials were stuck inside a lift while going for a raid on bars in Bhubaneswar as bar staff cut off power supply, police said Sunday.

The incident took place Saturday night in Chandrasekharpur area of Bhubaneswar when officials from Odisha Police and Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) were conducting raids on various bars for allegedly violating Covid norms, said Prakash Chandra Pal, ACP, Bhubaneswar (zone 6).

"A case has been registered at the Chandrasekharpur police station in this connection and five persons have been arrested today," said the ACP.

BMC zonal deputy commissioner Anshuman Rath, who was heading the enforcement team, said when he himself along with other officials tried to enter the bar in the lift, the bar personnel snapped the power supply.

"We got detained inside the elevator for nearly 30 to 40 minutes. Our teams found a crowd at the bar even after 10 pm, which is against the government stipulated guidelines," Rath said, adding that both the bars—BBI and OOPRE, located in the same building, have been sealed for an indefinite period.

BMC seals another bar for defying rules

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: The Joint Enforcement Squad of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) raided another bar in City Sunday and sealed it for violating Covid guidelines.

The raid on Moody Blues Bar and Restuarant at Gajapati Nagar here was led by Zonal Deputy Commissioner (North) Purandar Nanda, Zonal Deputy Commissioner (South East) Anshuman Rath, Assistant Commissioner (Enforcement) Lilan Prasad Sahu, and OSD to BMC on Covid duty Swarup Behera.

The bar & restaurant was found to be fully packed with guests even at 10.30pm which is in gross violation of Covid guidelines laid by the state government. The guests were dispersed immediately from the premises of the bar & restaurant. The place has been sealed indefinitely by the BMC Enforcement Team.

As per the norms, the night curfew, from 10.00pm to 5.00am, is still in effect in twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. However, several restaurants and bars here were seen operating in violation of the norms.

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SELECTION TRIAL



A participant performing a backstroke at district level selection trial for state level championship at Dr Jhasaketan Sahoo Swimming Pool in Sambalpur, Sunday

Outmigration in Paradip
owing to unemployment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, Sept 19: Absence of work opportunities has led to an exodus of people, mostly daily wagers, from the port town of Paradip, a report said.

The outmigration is stated to have started from March 2020 and continuing till now. The matter came to the fore after many people stopped taking their monthly quota of rice and wheat through ration cards under National Food Security Act. The number of ration card beneficiaries started declining after the start of Covid pandemic.

Both the Centre and state government have described Paradip as the economic gateway of the state time and again. Both have been drawing rosy pictures of employment and infrastructure development for people in the port town. However, the reality has been laid bare with the migration of people to other parts of the country from here.

Around 116 families have left Paradip within a year. Their names have been struck off from the ration card list after they stopped lifting their quota of rice and wheat.

Recently, the supplies department has started verifying the list of around 300 families that have stopped receiving rice and wheat through their ration cards. The name of these beneficiaries will be permanently struck off from the ration card list if they or their family members do not draw rations within a month.

Majority of the beneficiaries, whose names have been struck off from the ration card list, are outsiders and non-Odias. Lack of work opportunities for the daily wagers is stated to be the reason behind the migration of people from the port town.

Moreover, the Paradip fishing



Around 116 families have left Paradip within a year. Their names have been struck off from the ration card list after they stopped lifting their quota of rice and wheat

There were 4,500 employees working earlier in Paradip Port. However, the number has reduced and is now limited to only 600 employees

According to 1991 census, the population of port town was 49,255 which later increased 73,625 in 2001. However, the population of the port town again got reduced to 68,310 in 2011 census

harbour, which is a major fish landing and business centre, is passing through a very bad phase. As a result, many fishermen too are shifting their base to Andhra Pradesh due to lack of work.

According to reports available from the Paradip Municipality and Civil Supplies department, the population of Paradip has declined during last three decades.

According to 1991 census, the population of the port town was 49,255, which later increased 73,625 in 2001. However, according to 2011 census, the population of the port town again got reduced to 68,310. Meanwhile no census has been carried out in 2021 in view of Covid pandemic. It is apprehended that there will be sharp drop in population figure when the census work takes place in the port town.

According to sources, there were 4,500 employees working earlier in Paradip Port. However, the number has reduced and is now limited to only 600 employees.

Similarly, the number of ration card holders in the town was 8,452 in March, 2021. Now, the list is left with only 540 beneficiaries under Antyodaya Anna Yojana who are drawing their food stocks under Central and state food security schemes.

As many as 25 dealers have been appointed to supply food stocks to the beneficiaries. According to rules of food supply department, if any beneficiary fails to take his/her food stocks for a consecutive period of three months then their names will be automatically struck off from the list.

When contacted, Bibek Mohanty, district civil supplies officer said if a beneficiary does not take his food stock then it can be known online.

According to information available from the dealers, many beneficiaries have sold off their houses and shifted elsewhere due to lack of work opportunities while many have been transferred.

Fire breaks out at Paradip IOCL depot

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, Sept 19: Fire broke out at marketing depot of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) in Paradip town, Sunday afternoon. Thick smoke was seen rising out of the site following the incident. According to a source, the blaze

occurred due to sparks from the engine causing fire at the fuel point when a train was leaving IOCL depot after loading oil. Soon after, a petrol point nearby caught fire.

However, a major disaster could be averted at the petrol depot on IOCL premises as state fire services personnel, fire services wing of

Magistrate order forged for death certificate

POST NEWS NETWORK

Purusottampur, Sept 19: The order of an executive magistrate has been forged in Purusottampur area of Ganjam district in order to obtain a death certificate. Police Sunday arrested three people involved in the fraud – a notary, a lawyer and the owner of a Jana Seva Kendra.

The accused were identified as notary Simanchal Sethi of Ranjhali, lawyer Ramchandra Acharya of PNPur and Mahendra

Bahera, owner of Khajipalli Jana Seva Kendra.

All three were produced in court. However, their bail pleas were rejected by the court and they were sent to jail.

Police have seized computers, CPU, printer machine and some incriminating documents, said Purusottampur IIC Piyush Ranjan Chhotray.

Notably, some media house had reported that a death certificate had been obtained by a person by forging the order of a magistrate



court June 21.

Following media reports, tehsildar Nitish Kumar Sethi conducted an investigation into the matter for three months at the tehsil office

and Bhatakumuda CHC.

The investigation unearthed the forgery. The signature of executive magistrate Sunil Kumar Tudu was forged in an order. He was asked to file a police complaint in this regard.

The forged death certificate had been obtained in the name of one Jura Parida, father-in-law of Sishula Parida, a resident of Adheibara village under Kabisurya Nagar police limits. The notary, the lawyer and the Jana Seva Kendra owner were involved in the fraud.

Doctor records statement 'online' in Dhenkanal court

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Sept 19: A doctor from Koraput appeared in the assistant sessions judge court and special women's court here through video conferencing and recorded his statement in a case relating to a brutal attack on a woman under Bhopur police limits, Saturday.

He was identified as Dr Sibasai Swaroop of Sahid Laxman Nayak Medical College and Hospital in Koraput. He was earlier posted at

the government health centre at Bhopur and later transferred to Koraput district. This was stated here by additional public prosecutor (APP) Surya Narayan Tripathy to mediapersons.

As per an order of the Orissa High Court, the doctor appeared through video conference in the court of assistant sessions judge Sabitri Nayak and recorded his statement in the case as it was not possible for him to travel such long distance from Koraput during the Covid times.

The APP said that a woman under Sadar police limits in the district was brutally attacked by some persons in 2011. The woman had sustained critical injuries in the attack and was administered treatment by Dr Swaroop at Bhopur health centre. Sadar police registered a case-365/11 under Sections 307, 326, 294, 354(B) of IPC and 25 Arms Act. APP Tripathy pleaded the matter on behalf of the state government and advocate Durga Prasad Panda on behalf of the defendant.

Elderly woman left to die in jungle rescued

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Sept 19: An elderly woman who was left to die in the jungle by her family members was rescued Saturday by a few members of a social organisation 'Sankalp Pariwar'. She was rushed to the district headquarters hospital here in critical condition. Currently she is undergoing treatment at the hospital. Members of 'Sankalp Pariwar' however, refused to disclose her identity. They only said she belongs to Ghanghati village of Kharmunda panchayat under Attabira police limits in this district.

It has been alleged that the family members, instead of providing medical assistance to the ailing woman, left her inside the forest in a half-broken shanty to rot and die.

Sources said that the woman was suffering from various age-related health issues. She also had a wound on her head and there were white patches on her hands. Her superstitious family members thought that she had been besieged by evil and so they left her in the Barapahada forest. The ramshackle hut, where she was residing, had only a polythene cover over it. All the other sides were virtually open and she had no protection from nature.

Since it was impossible to reach the spot where the woman was residing, members of 'Sankalp Pariwar' carried her on a stretcher to the place where the ambulance was stationed. Then she was taken to the hospital. The entire incident has become a hot topic of discussion in this town. People are asking how the family members of the ailing woman could be so cruel to leave her to die unattended inside a forest.

CANNABIS CULTIVATION

Total ban in Ganjam; farmers encouraged to grow cash crops

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Sept 19: With illegal cultivation, storage and trade of ganja reaching an alarming level in the state, the Ganjam district administration has decided to fully ban illegal cannabis cultivation in the district.

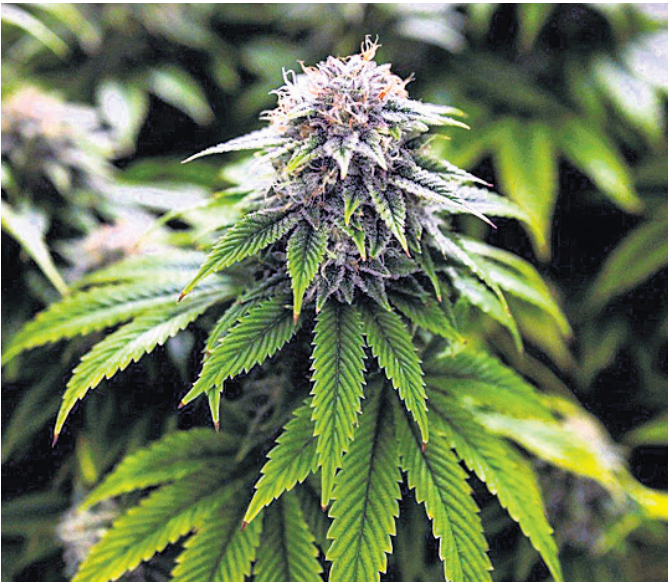
As part of this programme, the district administration has decided to wean people away from ganja cultivation and engage them in cultivation of other profitable cash crops. The matter came to the fore at a meeting of the district administration held in virtual mode, Saturday.

Presiding over the meeting, Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange urged officials to restrain people from taking up ganja cultivation and engage them in cultivation of cash crops which will help them earn a livelihood.

He informed officials that an action plan will soon be prepared to help people better their financial growth. He said that a farmer involved in ganja cultivation will withdraw only if he takes interest in growing some other crop and earns more from it. He also asked the agriculture department to provide training to people in cash crops so that they do not resort again to ganja cultivation.

He urged forest officials to keep a close watch so that illegal ganja farming does not take place in any of the forested areas. He directed all officials of line departments to form teams comprising police, excise, forest officials and magistrates and raid the places where ganja cultivation is taking place.

Reports said that illegal ganja cultivation on 157 acre including 112 acre by the district excise department and 45 acre by Berhampur excise department have been destroyed during last four years. The illegal cultivation is taking place mostly in the areas under Badagad police limits of Ganjam district and in the bordering regions of neighbour-



ILLEGAL CULTIVATION IS TAKING PLACE MOSTLY IN THE AREAS UNDER BADAGAD POLICE LIMITS OF GANJAM DISTRICT AND IN THE BORDERING REGIONS OF NEIGHBOURING GAJAPATI AND KANDHAMAL DISTRICTS

REPORTS SAID THAT ILLEGAL GANJA CULTIVATION ON 157 ACRE INCLUDING 112 ACRE BY THE DISTRICT EXCISE DEPARTMENT AND 45 ACRE BY BERHAMPUR EXCISE DEPARTMENT HAVE BEEN DESTROYED DURING LAST FOUR YEARS

MAOISTS ARE INCREASINGLY GETTING INVOLVED IN GANJA CULTIVATION AND TRADE TO FUND THEIR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

ing Gajapati and Kandhamal districts.

Ganja cultivation is on the rise in several hilly areas of the state year by year. This is happening due to easy money earned from the trade. As a result, sale and purchase of weed is getting popular among the inter-state drug traffickers.

Mostly, Maoists are increasingly getting involved in ganja cultivation and trade to fund their subversive activities. They are patronising the gullible locals and peddlers in districts such as Malkangiri, Koraput, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Boudh, Gajapati, Nabarangpur, Angul, Sambalpur and Deogarh to take up its cultivation and trade to earn easy money. The illegal cultivation is bleeding the state of vital revenue which is flowing

into the wrong hands.

The hilly terrains and dense forests of these districts serve as ideal ground for ganja cultivators and peddlers. Lack of good roads and bridges are the barriers for excise officials who do not dare to venture into the ganja fields fearing backlashes from the Naxals during the raid.

The Collector asked the officials to intensify the awareness drive in all these concerned areas by involving the local representatives, block development officers (BDOs) and members of voluntary outfits.

Among others, Ganjam Excise Superintendent Rajesh Botra, his Berhampur counterpart Ramesh Nayak, ASP PK Dalei and horticulture dean Sarat Chandra Behera participated in the meeting.

ROAD BLOCKADE



Residents staging a road blockade on National Highway 5(A) demanding drainage of rain water from Balijhara slum in Paradip, Sunday

OP PHOTO

OFFICE OF THE REGULATED MARKET COMMITTEE, KARANJIA
(e-mail ID- rmckja2@gmail.com)
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS THROUGH e-Procurement
Bid Identification No.01 e-Procurement Notice No.01 of 2021-22
TENDER CALL NOTICE No. 205/RMC, dated 16.09.2021
The Sub-Collector, Panchpir-cum-Chairman, RMC Karanjia invites percentage rate bids in Double Cover system in online mode for the works as detailed below:

Sl. No.	Name of work	Approx. value of work (in Rs.)	Security (in Rs.) (Online)	Cost of bid document (in Rs.) (Online)	Class of contractor	Period of completion	Cover system
1	Construction of 24 Nos. Shop-cum-small godowns Ground Floor + First Floor in (BLOCK-A & BLOCK-B) with Site development at Karanjia Town of RMC, Karanjia.	9919790.00	-NA- (Bid Declaration)	10000/-	'B' & 'A'	09 (Nine) calendar months	Double cover


The bid documents will be available in the website from 10.00 A.M. of 20.09.2021 to 04.10.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. for online bidding. The bid shall be received only on online or before dt.04.10.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. & received bid will be opened at 11.00 A.M. on dt.05.10.2021 in the Office of the RMC, Karanjia.

Further details can be seen from the website <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of the tender etc. can also be seen in the website: <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>.

Sd./- Sub-Collector, Panchpir-cum-Chairman, R.M.C., Karanjia

“All desires and egoism will have to be banished from the being.”

SRI AUROBINDO



AUKUS Focus

A virtual diplomatic war has broken out between France on one hand and the AUKUS (Australia-UK-USA) combine on the other over the new alliance among the three latter countries September 16 and its fallout - a nuclear-powered submarine deal clinched between Australia and the USA. The alliance has been forged to checkmate China in the Indo-Pacific region giving far more power and confidence to the earlier Quad grouping comprising Australia, Japan, USA and India formed with the same intent to frustrate China's maritime designs in the region. Seemingly, India and Japan have been kept out of the new arrangement which adds a new dimension to the united efforts to thwart China's ambitions in the common sphere of activities. The initial reaction of China to the AUKUS was predictably belligerent and it issued an official statement terming the new grouping 'irresponsible' and an attempt to revive the 'Cold War' that would trigger an arms race threatening the stability of the region. This is only natural, since China will now have to confront nuclear-powered submarines and also a US nuclear power base in Australia. So long it has been pursuing its goal of controlling the Indo-Pacific region with its dominance over the South China Sea without any deterrence of the caliber of the AUKUS.

But when many countries of the region, including India, Japan and Australia, feeling threatened by China's unchallenged aggression in the Indo-Pacific region, were joyous following the new development, France fired September 18 a diplomatic missile on AUKUS that may well sound like music to China's ears. France has called the new alliance "a stab in the back." It accused Australia and the USA of lying over a contract Australia had entered into with France to buy French conventional submarines worth Aus\$50 billion (US\$36.5 billion, 31 billion euros) when signed in 2016. This makes it clear that the AUKUS grouping too, like all modern military operations, implies plain simple big business deals.

France has warned a grave crisis is going to engulf its allies and the NATO as a whole. The sudden cancellation of the Australia-French submarine deal and the inking of the Australia-US new deal is a huge setback for French President Emmanuel Macron not only because of its impact on business and job loss for France, but also on the fate of his electoral battle as he is soon going to face the French voter for a second term in office. His immediate reaction has been the symbolic protest by way of recalling French ambassadors from Canberra and Washington. The diplomatic row has also queered the pitch for a post-Donald Trump rapprochement between France and the USA.

In fact, French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian used the most undiplomatic language towards Australia, the United States and Britain to term the deal an outcome of "lying, duplicity, a major breach of trust and contempt."

He simply brushed aside the Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison's plea that he had informed France beforehand about the new arrangement. The "information," Le Drian insisted, was conveyed to France only an hour before the announcement was made about the formation of the alliance and the submarine deal with the USA. This, according to him, is very humiliating.

Le Drian described the withdrawal of the ambassadors for the first time in the history of relations with the countries as a "very symbolic" act that aimed "to show how unhappy we are and that there is a serious crisis between us." He reserved his invectives for the UK describing its role as that of a rank "opportunistic." "We know their constant opportunism. So there is no need to bring our ambassador (from London) back," Le Drian said.

Immediately thereafter the USA and Australia have gone about mollifying France, but the wounds are too deep to heal any time soon. Biden sought to underscore the dire necessity of extending American nuclear submarine technology to Australia and cyber-defence, applied artificial intelligence and undersea capabilities to counter the rise of China. A White House official expressed "regret" over the French envoy's recall and exuded confidence that the USA would continue to be engaged with France in the coming days to resolve their differences.

To assuage France's feeling of betrayal Australia has fielded its Finance Minister Simon Birmingham who iterated Australia doesn't underestimate the importance of France as its ally in their ongoing engagement in the region.

The AUKUS alliance is also likely to have important implications for Southeast Asia and the role of the ASEAN. Obviously, some of the nations in South East Asia, concerned over China's growing military power in the South China Sea, will be quietly supportive of the move, which will impose higher costs on any military adventurism by the Chinese.

However, mere strategic alliances are not enough to contain China which has deep economic ties with many countries in the region. Significantly enough, two days after the AUKUS was formed, China filed an application to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership which had been signed by 11 countries including Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan and New Zealand in 2018. The move evinces Beijing's keenness to deepen its economic integration with the region so as to pull these nations to its orbit by sheer economic gravity.

The new alignment of AUKUS in the Indo-Pacific region has at least given a strong signal that the USA is not going to withdraw into a shell following its pullout from Afghanistan, leaving its allies and partners in Asia high and dry.

WISDOM CORNER

- “Knowing your own darkness is the best method for dealing with the darknesses of other people.”

CARL JUNG
- “Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.”

DALAI LAMA
- “I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the heart's affections, and the truth of imagination.”

JOHN KEATS

WORDSWORTH

Peradventure

The online Oxford English Dictionary has added a note to each entry showing how often it appears in current use. Peradventure appears in band 2, which the dictionary says contains "terms which are not part of normal discourse and would be unknown to most people." The Times mocked Labour MP Harriet Harman in April 2015 for using it on a BBC television discussion programme ("if I make it absolutely clear, beyond peradventure ..."). The Times writer admitted he had to look it up. Peradventure means "uncertainty" or "chance". Beyond peradventure (sometimes as beyond a peradventure) is a fixed phrase that can pop up from the subconscious of a well-read but stressed person without allowing its owner time to think about whether it would be understood. It may be rendered in everyday English as "beyond question" or "without doubt". It may be adventurous to use it but where's the adventure in it? Historically, there is none. It comes to us from Old French per aventure, by chance. Adventure has had a mildly exotic history. We can trace it back to Latin aventura, a future form of the verb adventure, to happen — so something that may occur. By the time it reached Old French it could variously mean destiny or fate, a chance event, an accident, fortune or luck. The sense of adventure that was first taken into English was that of a chance event or accident. The French word also came to be used in English as adventure, also at first for some chance event, but then for a risk of danger or loss. (Marine insurers still sometimes use adventure to mean the time during which insured goods are at risk.) Its sense shifted to a hazardous undertaking or audacious exploit — especially the sort carried out by medieval knights — but much more recently softened to sometimes mean merely a novel or exciting experience.



Saeed Naqvi

ISRAEL, WHICH IS BUSY ADJUSTING TO LIMITS ON ITS POWER AS A CONCEPT, MUST PLACE IN ITS CALCULUS THE US DISTANCING ITSELF FROM THE ARAB THEATRE

What could possibly be common between the Taliban brandishing their weapons in Kabul and Palestinians twirling their spoons (yes, teaspoons) with a flourish? Well, the latter were celebrating because six Palestinian prisoners had pulled off a seemingly impossible escape from the high security Gilboa prison in Northern Israel. Clearly, an embarrassment for a state which flaunts national security as a marketable commodity. The spoon has become an emblem because the six used it as an implement to dig a hole in the toilet attached to their cell.

The prisoners, according to Israeli authorities, were affiliated with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. According to the Times of Israel, the leader of the group, Zakaria Zubeidi, was "a former commander in Fatah's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade." That Zubeidi and three others (at the time of writing) have been arrested is a separate chapter: Kabul and Gilboa establish without any shadow of a doubt a reality all too common in history: limits to power. In this instance, the US globally and its ally Israel, regionally — particularly considering its stalemate with Arab militias like Hezbollah.

Massive intelligence failure attended both the events. True, a jailbreak cannot be compared with the re-conquest of a country but that is not the way Palestinians see it. The Times of Israel reports: "The escape is considered a highly symbolic success for the terror groups. It is being celebrated with 'euphoria' among Palestinians."

The Taliban, likewise, in the initial flush are folk heroes in Afghanistan and beyond having done a David on Goliath. To bring out the irony in sharp focus on the US debacle in Afghanistan, recall the January 29, 2002, State of the Union address by then President George W Bush. The President sketched in bold colours the 'Axis of Evil.' Ironies upon ironies attend that speech. Bush welcomes Hamid Karzai as "leader of liberated Afghanistan." Karzai

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

LIMITS OF POWER



Is a phase of imperialism coming full circle? One cannot expect US President Joe Biden to say it in quite that language, but what else does one make of his promise to end "never ending" wars

is now under house arrest. Bush gloats "Terrorists who once occupied Afghanistan now occupy cells at Guantanamo Bay." There is a disconcerting update on this too. Not only have the Taliban returned to power in Kabul, at least five in the new Kabul power structure were released from Guantanamo Bay in 2015.

What does all this portend? Is a phase of imperialism coming full circle? One cannot expect US President Joe Biden to say it in quite that language, but what else does one make of his promise to end "never ending" wars. American youth, who are now 20 years of age, have never seen "America at peace." Suicide rate among military veterans as high as 18 per day? Biden clearly abhors this data.

The problem, of course is, that Biden is only the President, not the system. Even so he is proceeding with some sense of the consensus he has forged around him. For him to declassify the secret FBI report which reveals the connection of Saudi Nationals to 9/11, indicates a sharp departure from past practice. Remember the days of George W Bush and his buddy Saudi Ambassador Bandar bin Sultan, or Bandar Bush as he was called because of his chumminess with

the President? Those days seem like ancient history, days when Israel and Saudi Arabia were equally sacrosanct. Both had to be protected from bad copy.

And now even military protection is being withdrawn. In recent weeks the US removed its most advanced missile defence system, and Patriot batteries from the Kingdom which faces attacks from, say, Houthis in Yemen. Troop reductions from Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan have also been confirmed by the Pentagon. Departure from Afghanistan will remain vivid in our minds for years. Despite these stories every American strategist will tell you "the Middle East is not being abandoned." There is that 'over the horizon' capability which includes updated drones. British premier Boris Johnson calls it "outside-in" ability.

Israel, which is busy adjusting to limits on its power as a concept, must place in its calculus the US distancing itself from the Arab theatre. Yes, support for Israel in the US remains durable — Jewish control of banks, media, institutes of learning, election, finance. What is not so well known is what Noam Chomsky describes as much the most powerful support for Israel — Christian Zionism. Former Israeli Ambassador in the

US, Ron Dermer, has urged Israel to prioritise maintaining the support of the American evangelical Christian. It must be assiduously wooed. "People must understand that the backbone of support for Israel in the US is the evangelical Christian." The quote is from The Palestinian Policy Network, Al-Shabaka. Israel can breathe easy because there is no indication of Biden distancing himself from this line of thinking.

US thinning out from the region will accentuate popular perception of Israel's exclusive support base inside the US. As Israel rolls its eyes around to size up the neighbourhood for subtle adjustments, it will find to its chagrin, Iran undiminished. Houthis in Yemen, Hashd al Shaabi in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon, groups supportive of President Assad in Syria and increasing reports of Iranian role in Afghanistan, initiated by the late Quds Commander, Qasem Soleimani — all of these enhance Iran's position in the region. The cookie in Afghanistan having crumbled the way it has, Iran's role in this theatre may in the future be of interest to the US.

The launch of AUKUS (Australia, UK and US), an idea borrowed conceptually from ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand and US) against the Soviet Union, shows the urgency Biden accords to what Barack Obama called 'pivot to Asia.' The pivot was of much greater saliency. West Asia, though still important, had placed a disproportionate demand on Washington's attention. The nuclear deal conferred on Tehran the kind of legitimacy that was to have enabled it to balance power in the region. This would be in concert with Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt, Turkey. The regional balance of power would then require less day-to-day attention, freeing Washington to pay greater attention to the pivot. That appears to be the route on Biden's GPS.

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

IANS

SPECTRUM CLIMATE ACTION

Norway's sovereign duty

Recent developments in Norway could have momentous implications for climate-related commitments at the UN climate-change conference (COP26) in Glasgow this November.

In August, a government-appointed committee recommended that Norway put its sovereign wealth fund (SWF) on track for net-zero greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, and that the fund's activities be made consistent with Norway's commitments under international climate agreements. Soon thereafter, the Norwegian Labour Party's candidate for prime minister, Jonas Gahr Støre, confirmed that, if elected, he would introduce a net-zero target for the fund. Now that Støre has emerged victorious in this month's parliamentary elections, his challenge is to form a coalition that will allow him to follow through on his conviction.

Norway's \$1.4 trillion Government Pension Fund Global is the world's largest SWF. But the country has been hesitant to put the weight of its fund behind its own international climate commitments. It is not alone. Under existing international agreements, climate commitments are based on emissions originating within each country's physical borders. Emissions resulting from countries' foreign asset holdings are not

counted in the domestic inventory. Thus, while governments have scrutinised their economies for emissions cuts, they have tended to leave their countries' SWFs on the sideline. As a result, only one sovereign fund, Germany's KENFO, has signed on to the United Nations-convened Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance, which represents some \$6.7 trillion in assets under management, and counts 46 pension funds and insurance companies among its members.

Given that Norway's massive SWF owns 1.4 per cent of all the world's listed companies, on average, the country's apparent change of heart is important both symbolically and as a practical matter. The new Norwegian government is backed up by the recent recommendation from Olivier Blanchard, a former chief economist at the International Monetary Fund, and others recommending it to sign up its SWF for the Net-Zero Alliance at COP26.

But Norway should not stop there. All told, sovereign funds represent some \$10 trillion in assets under management, or about seven times that of Norway's SWF alone. As the country with the world's largest SWF, Norway should spearhead a diplomatic effort for a global movement of sovereign funds toward net-zero commitments at COP26.

Norway has a proud history of activist international diplomacy. Its highly capable foreign service has played a central role in mediating an end to armed conflicts around the world. Moreover, its sovereign-fund manager, Norges Bank Investment Management, is a sophisticated and globally respected investor. Together, these attributes place Norway in a strong position to mobilise others within a sovereign-fund coalition toward net-zero targets.

Fortunately, some SWFs have already demonstrated burgeoning climate ambitions. Norway can look to countries like France, Ireland, New Zealand, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates for potential partners. These countries' sovereign funds have sophisticated investment teams that would be perfectly capable of implementing net-zero targets. And one hopes that when they do, SWFs at an earlier stage of their climate commitments, or that have more limited resources, will join the new global consensus.

As the most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reminds us, the window for averting catastrophic climate change is closing quickly.

Under these fraught conditions, governments with large foreign asset holdings should look for ways

to mitigate climate change not only within their borders but across all assets that they own and are able to influence. For Norway and several Gulf countries whose SWFs' asset holdings amount to multiples of their domestic economy's GDP, the largest potential climate gains can be found in SWF portfolios.

Countries with SWFs should recognise that accounting for climate risk and climate-related investment opportunities is no longer sufficient.

Norway, a star of international peace negotiations, should seize the opportunity to lead a global sovereign-fund movement. Doing so would establish it as a champion of international climate diplomacy and leadership. For a country that built its wealth by pumping hydrocarbons out of the seabed and exporting them along with their inherent GHG emissions, it is the right thing to do.

Figures is former executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Halland is Senior Economist at OECD Development Centre. Mork is Professor at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

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Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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



OrissaPOST
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Endemic COVID

Sir, As India gets ready to face a possible third wave of COVID-19, WHO chief scientist Dr Soumya Swaminathan has said: "India seems to be entering some stage of COVID-19 endemicity where there is low- to moderate-level transmission." Earlier this year, scientists had indicated in a survey carried out by the journal Nature that the SARS-CoV-2 virus is set to become endemic and would continue to circulate in pockets of the global population. So now we have to take precautionary measures against this virus. All healthcare facilities, from rural to urban, should be available at affordable prices. The availability of oxygen is still expected at all primary health centres and community health centres. Special attention is needed in rural areas, as thousands of people lost their lives in the second wave without access to healthcare. We have learned from the first and second waves of the pandemic that the lives of millions of people in the country have been lost due to the neglect of the health system.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Vaccine hesitancy

Sir, This refers to the news report "Many shy away from second jab," Orissa POST, September 19. It is disturbing that certain sections of the population have developed vaccine hesitancy. The latest data and pattern indicate that vaccination has been effective in slowing down the spread of the infection and has considerably brought down the need to hospitalise those that have been infected. As per a recent report of the Centres of Disease Control and Prevention in the US, unvaccinated people are 10 times more likely to be hospitalised with COVID-19 and 11 times more likely to die from the disease. As of now, India has fully vaccinated around 20 per cent of its eligible population, while 62 per cent have received at least one dose. This appears as a rosy picture, but the experiences of the United States and Britain tell us a different story as the infection spread virulently, mainly in unvaccinated regions. Given that the efficacy of the vaccine is only 70-90 per cent, and that breakthrough infections are reported among 10 to 25 per cent, the unvaccinated segment is also highly likely to be the trigger for, and victim of, the next wave. In this context, one can draw the inference that India is not out of woods yet, and inoculation of all with two doses is imperative.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Defunct LI systems add to farmers' woes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhendipada, Sept 19: Farmers in Angul district are already suffering due to scanty rainfall during the monsoon season this year. To add to their woes, more than half of the 81 Lift Irrigation (LI) points in this block have gone defunct. It has led to the farmland remaining uncultivated and farmers suffering huge losses. Farmers who had invested in paddy cultivation are now unsure as to what the returns will be. They have given up hope of earning substantially as most of the crops are set to rot.

According to official sources, Chhendipada block has a total of 35,806 hectares of farmland, of which paddy is cultivated on approximately 12,463 hectares, a senior official informed Sunday.

The target set for paddy cultivation fixed for Chhendipada block will not be met this year, due to lack of proper irrigation facilities,



the official pointed out. He said out of the 41 defunct LI points, pipelines have run down in some and power supply has been disconnected in others, due to non-payment of electricity bill.

Farmer Bal Pradhan of Kankare village, said that acres of land near the lift irrigation point have been left fallow. "The project has been botched up to mint money. During

the pandemic, farmers had focused on farming. But defunct LI points had left us disappointed," he added.

Purna Chandra Sahu, a farmer of the same village laminated that not a drop of water is available from the LI point for farming even though lakhs of rupees have been spent for the project.

On being contacted, block agriculture officer of Chhendipada,

Chhendipada block has a total of 35,806 hectares of farmland, of which paddy is cultivated on approximately 12,463 hectares, a senior official informed Sunday.

The target set for paddy cultivation fixed for Chhendipada block will not be met this year, due to lack of proper irrigation facilities. Out of the 41 defunct LI points, pipelines have run down in some and power supply has been disconnected in others

Acres of land near the lift irrigation points have been left fallow. The projects have been botched up for money, farmer Bal Pradhan said

Binod Kumar Dalei said, "Out of 41 defunct LI points, power supply to 18 have been disconnected, which will be restored by October. The remaining 23 LI points will be made functional after discussion with respective 'Pani Panchayat' representatives."

Mayurbhanj: 399 schools to undergo transformation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 19: The district administration has been carrying out its initiatives to transform schools in Mayurbhanj district. A total of 399 high schools in the district have been brought under school transformation programme.

According to 'Samagra Sikhya Abhiyan', 60 high schools were initially picked up for the transformation programme in the district in the first phase while 339 were taken up for smart schools in the second phase.

The transformation programme is in progress in various parts with District Collector Vineet Bhardwaj monitoring its execution. The overall facelift has been implemented under 5T (team work, technology, transparency, transformation and time limit) action plan.



The remaining schools in the district will be included in the programme in the third phase.

These schools are being equipped with features like any modern private schools have like digital blackboards, smart classrooms, computer labs, libraries, science labs, playgrounds, e-libraries, advanced science laboratories, clean drinking water facilities, toilets and

sports fields.

The transformation of these schools involves soft components using technology for better education content and methods to reach children.

Community, alumni, Panchayati Raj institution representatives and school committees are involved in planning and execution of the transformation programme.

Youth murdered over past enmity



POST NEWS NETWORK

Beguniapada, Sept 12: A youth was allegedly murdered Sunday morning at Khadal Sahi under Kodala police limits in Ganjam district. The incident triggered tension in the area. Local residents set houses on fire of the suspected assailants, later in the day.

According to an eyewitness, some miscreants attacked a youth named Kalu Dash, 42 with sharp weapons in broad day light. Kalu was returning from a shop in the locality when some miscreants waylaid and attacked him with iron bars and

The incident triggered tension in Kodala area. Irate local residents set houses of the suspected assailants on fire, later in the day. Three people were detained

have been the reason which led to Kalu's death. Police are also yet to arrest anybody while three persons have been detained and questioned in this connection.

The irked residents staged a sit-in and blocked the main road in this town demanding exemplary punishment for the guilty. The irate residents ran amok and torched three houses of the accused persons and damaged four bikes.

Since the incident has created resentment and tension, police personnel have been stationed at the locality where the incident occurred. The Ganjam ADM, Purusotampur SDPO accompanied by Kodala police also visited the spot and took stock of the situation.

sharp-edged weapons.

Kalu sustained grievous injuries and succumbed on the spot. Another youth who tried to save the victim from the attackers was also injured in the incident. He is undergoing treatment at a hospital here, but his condition is stated to be critical, locals informed.

On being informed, Kodala police reached Khadal Sahi and launched a probe in this connection. Police seized the body of Kalu and sent it for post-mortem. The exact cause behind the murder has not been ascertained yet.

Sources said past enmity may

TOTAL PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN



Women stage a sit-in outside the panchayat office protesting illegal liquor sale at Jalasuan village under Anandapur block in Keonjhar district, Sunday

Bike-ambulance goes for a toss

TRIBALS IN BONDAGHATI REGION HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT SUCH HEALTH SERVICE; A YOUTH WAS SEEN RIDING THE BIKE AFTER DISMOUNTING THE ACCESSORIES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 19: As many parts of Bondaghati in Malkangiri district are inaccessible, the Odisha government had launched a bike-ambulance service at Mudulipada and Andarahal panchayats in March, 2021. The ambulance service was meant for 9,000 people living in 32 villages. The villagers had then thought that the introduction of the bike-ambulance service would end the medical miseries to a great extent.

However, after a few months of operation, the service has allegedly been stopped. The service was jointly sponsored by the Bonda Development Agency and an NGO called 'Vikash'.

A youth of Balipahad in Andarahal panchayat was assigned to operate the bike-ambulance. Now, the ambulance lies locked inside a garage at Ankadoli area of neighbouring Koraput district. Locals



A part of the ambulance lies locked inside a garage at Ankadoli area of neighbouring Koraput district

alleged that another youth is using the bike after dismantling accessories from it.

Surprisingly, many people are not even aware of the bike-ambulance service. Some reputed local persons alleged that the government has

been implementing a host of welfare programmes for the Bonda tribe, but these schemes have failed to make any difference due to official apathy.

When contacted about the bike-ambulance service, the local

For over two months, we have no idea about the whereabouts of the bike-ambulance. We do not know whether it has suffered any malfunction or where it has been kept

SARPANCH | ANDARAHAL PANCHAYAT

sarpanch said, "For over two months, we have no idea about the whereabouts of the bike-ambulance. We do not know whether it has suffered any malfunction or where it has been kept."

Sadananda Pradhan, team leader of 'Vikash', the NGO in-charge of the bike-ambulance said he had no idea about the present state of affairs. "The matter will be investigated and action will be taken for those responsible for the bike-ambulance going out of service, he added.

15 kids rescued, 3 middlemen arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 19: Amid allegations of ongoing child trafficking in Malkangiri district, police rescued 15 child labourers and arrested three middlemen at the Kalimela bus stand in this town, Sunday. They were being taken in a car and the vehicle was also seized by the police. Mohan Harijana of Umerkote in Nabarangpur district was the main



person behind the trafficking the 15 children to Karimnagar in Telangana where they would be engaged as labourers.

Harijan left the children at the Kalimela bus stand. There, two middlemen identified as Tapan Mandal and Sachin Sardar of MV-57 village were on the verge of taking them to Telangana in a car.

On being informed, Kalimela ASI Kunal Kumar and other officials raided the area and rescued the children. A case has been registered against the three. The three accused were produced in court and remanded to judicial custody.

Sans bridge, villagers risk lives while crossing Gadapur river

POST NEWS NETWORK

R Udayagiri, Sept 19: Both the Odisha and central governments have a number of schemes to boost connectivity through roads and bridges in remote areas. However, it seems that all efforts have failed to connect villages like Rajkhama in the Garadama panchayat, 70km from Mohana block in Gajapati district. During the monsoons, the life of people in Rajkhama remains confined to the village only as they fail to go out as rivers and creeks are in full flow.

In case of emergency, people of seven villages have no way but to cross Gadapur river by clutching a wire they have tied to trees on both the banks of the river. Absence of a bridge and roads across a river is their major problem, they lamented.

A total of 35 families live at Rajkhama village. The other villages that have been suffering from commuting woes are Betaganda, Kuruma, Kutipadar, Gurupanga and Panisadhai. Most of these villages lack even the basic facilities and clean and hygienic drinking water remains a dream for them.

Locals say, a road had been laid till the Rajkhama village after repeated complaints from its resident. However, the road was washed away by recent floods. The villagers have been demanding for the construction of a bridge on the river for years. However, all their appeals seem to be falling on deaf ears as the authorities have not paid heed to their plight.

The Rural Development de-



The villages that have been suffering from commuting woes are Rajkhama, Betaganda, Kuruma, Kutipadar, Gurupanga and Panisadhai over years sans basic amenities

partment has built some culverts for smooth passages, but they are in equally bad shape.

Thousands of villagers have to risk their lives while crossing the river to go to work or during medical emergencies.

"We have to wade through waist-deep water to cross the river

which does not have a bridge over it for the commuters," they said. "Whenever a pregnant woman or patient needs to be hospitalised, the person is forced to cross the river clinging on to the rope," they added.

Locals say, they have urged the local leaders, the administration and the even ministers about the need for bridge, but no step has been taken till date. They said the situation is precarious for children to cross the river during the monsoons. So they stay away from schools.

Many people have expressed their displeasure over the lack of development in the region. They said, they would boycott the coming panchayat elections unless their demands are fulfilled.

Granite-laden trucks released, Congress leader blames officials

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 19: Nine granite-laden vehicles that were seized Friday night near Peta village under Motu tehsil were released following the intervention of local police IIC and the regional transport officer (RTO) here in this town, former Congress MP of Nabarangpur, Pradeep Majhi alleged Sunday. Majhi alleged that the vehicles were involved in the illegal transportation of VG granite to outside the state through the Odisha-Andhra border.

Motu police had detained nine vehicles during routine inspection. When questioned, the drivers or their assistants failed to provide any valid documents regarding the transportation of granite. So those were seized, informed Majhi.

He also alleged that the company involved in the transportation of the granite managed to prepare 'fake' documents in collusion with the police and RTO officials.



Anganwadi and ASHA workers under Padmapur block in Rayagada district conducting an awareness drive on open defecation free village

OP PHOTO

Yogi releases report card

UP govt to raise retirement age of docs to 70 yrs

AGENCIES

Lucknow, Sept 19: Asserting that Uttar Pradesh has undergone a complete transformation under his government, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said Sunday that there have been no riots since 2017, strict action has been taken against the mafia and the state is in the frontline of implementing welfare schemes, ensuring the ease of doing business and fighting the Covid-19 pandemic.

Making public his government's report card months before facing the assembly polls, the chief minister also hit out at the opposition, saying they were busy building their houses when they were in power; indulged in corruption and nepotism, caused suffering to the sugarcane farmers and used to see centres of faith like Ayodhya from a communal point of view.

"In the 2022 Assembly elections, BJP will cross 350 seats (out of 403 seats), and there should be no doubt on this," the Chief Minister said at a press conference and stressed that his government has fulfilled every promise mentioned in the Lok Kalyan Sankalp Patra in 2017.

"The opposition should read it. Had the opposition attended our training camps, they would have learnt something, and would have got wisdom," he remarked.

Uttar Pradesh is now number one in implementing 44 central schemes be it the PM Awas Yojna or construction of toilets in the households and its image is no longer liked with riots and lawlessness due to effective and transparent governance, Adityanath said.

"Unlike them (previous governments), we did not make luxurious houses for ourselves. Our government focused on building houses for the poor," he said, taking a veiled dig at his predecessor



Report card is full of lies: Oppn

Poverty, unemployment and inflation have soared in the four-and-half-year rule of the BJP in Uttar Pradesh and the report card released by the government highlighting its achievements is all gas and full of lies, the opposition parties charged Sunday. The Samajwadi Party said, "The 16 page booklet published by the BJP government is 16 aane (hundred per cent) lies." The Bahujan Samaj Party said the advertisement of transformation of four-and-half years is "all gas and far from reality". Dismissing the claims as "rhetoric", SP chief Akhilesh Yadav tweeted, "Six

months are left for this government, which has committed atrocities on farmers, poor, women and the youth through unemployment, inflation, hatred and slump in business." Attacking the BJP government, Rashtriya Kisan Manch president Shekhar Dixit said, "Four years ago, a promise was made that the sugarcane price will be paid to the farmers in 14 days. But this was conveniently forgotten, and till date, no statement from the government came on this. Corruption is rampant at the wheat and paddy purchase centres in the state."

Akhilesh Yadav.

"Government bungalows were demolished, and there was a competition to build houses for themselves as well as huge 'havelis' (mansions). But the four-and-half years were dedicated to good governance. And we did not build houses for ourselves, but for 42 lakh poor people of the state," he said. He said criminals were firmly dealt with irrespective of their

caste, religion and social status to provide a safe and secure environment in the state. He also claimed the government displayed sensitivity at every level. Facing criticism over the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, the chief minister pointed out that the state has the highest number of tests and vaccinations and is among those with the lowest positivity rates.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sept 19: In view of the shortage of medical staff in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has decided to increase the retirement age of doctors from 65 years to 70 years.

Uttar Pradesh medical education minister, Suresh Khanna, said that the cabinet will soon be passing a proposal in this regard as the government believes that this will help the state in fighting the corona pandemic and other diseases with much more experienced doctors. Doctors with more experience are needed at the moment, he told reporters.

100 people allowed at weddings in UP

AGENCIES

Lucknow, Sept 19: The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has now issued fresh guidelines, extending the number of guests at weddings and other functions to 100.

According to an order by Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Avanshi Awasthi, the maximum number of people allowed at weddings and other celebrations will now be 100 instead of the earlier 50.

A maximum of 100 persons will be allowed in both open and enclosed places. The guests will have to adhere to safety protocols that include wearing masks and using sanitisers. Social distancing will have to be strictly followed while making seating arrangements, besides making proper arrangements for sanitation and cleanliness of toilets at the venue where the function is being organised.



"After retirement, doctors open their private clinics, but it will be better that they give their services to us. Keeping this in view, we have prepared the proposal. Yogi

Adityanath has also given his consent on this and soon it will be approved by the cabinet," he said.

The minister further said, "The Yogi Adityanath government has

fulfilled every promise of the Lok Sankalp Patra so far in its tenure. Under the leadership of Yogi Adityanath, we have done those things which were difficult for the SP and BSP to even imagine. Right now, the situation in the other states is very bad regarding Corona, but today in UP, there are more than 35 such districts, which have become free from Corona."

"Even in the matter of vaccination, we have left the rest of the states far behind. Today, more than 50 per cent of the population in UP has taken the first dose of the vaccine. The number of medical colleges opened by this government has not been opened in any previous government," he added.

AN EMOTIONAL FAREWELL



A devotee holding an idol of Ganesh, offers prayers before immersing at Murad Nagar Ganga canal in Ghaziabad

BJP breaks silence on Babul Supriyo joining TMC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 19: A day after former union minister Babul Supriyo joined Trinamool Congress (TMC), the BJP West Bengal unit claimed that it has no impact on the saffron party.

In the last few months, four BJP MLAs including Mukul Roy have joined the Trinamool. The saffron party believes that the Supriyo and other MLAs had no impact and presence at ground.



Supriyo, who was dropped from the Union Cabinet in July, joined the TMC Saturday

West Bengal BJP leaders termed Surpiyo an 'opportunist' who joined the party before 2014 Lok Sabha polls and left soon after being dropped from the union cabinet. Saffron party cadre in West Bengal believes he (Supriyo) was neither popular nor have influence among cadre.

BJP West Bengal president Dilip Ghosh said, "Supriyo lost his popularity among cadre and people in his Lok Sabha constituency Asansol. He was completely missing from his constituency for over eight months. He has lost his popularity in the state and that is one of the reasons behind Supriyo losing assembly polls five months ago."

Ghosh said that his only priority was to remain 'mantri' (minister) without working for people. "Soon after being dropped from the union cabinet, Babul announced to quit politics. Within two days he changed his mind and said he will remain an MP to serve the people of Asansol. Yesterday, he joined TMC. His only agenda is to get a position not service," Ghosh said. Supriyo, who was dropped from the union cabinet in July, Saturday joined the TMC. In a Facebook post in July, Supriyo had announced that he has decided to quit politics.

FEAR AND MISTRUST

'No clinical trials of Covid jab on transgenders'

TRANSGENDERS UNDERGO SEVERAL SURGERIES AS WELL AS HORMONAL TREATMENTS AND THERE HAS BEEN NO TRIAL SO FAR TO SEE WHETHER VACCINES HAVE ANY ADVERSE IMPACT DUE TO IT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 19: A sizeable number of transgenders in West Bengal are yet to get the

Covid-19 jab, the primary reasons being fear and mistrust among them about its impact owing to lack of clinical trial on them till date, experts said.

Transgenders undergo several surgeries as well as hormonal treatments and there has been no trial so far to see whether Covid-19 vaccines have any adverse impact due to it, they said.

Even threats of social boycott, taking away benefits of social schemes and of even stopping monthly rations could not force them to take the vaccine, several transgenders from across West Bengal said.

"A big chunk of the transgender community is yet to take the vaccine. This is because they are confused and have medical mistrust since no clinical trial was conducted," clinical trial specialist and pharmacologist Subhrojyoti Bhowmick said.

Since the transgenders undergo treatments like hormonal therapy, breast implant, vaginoplasty (con-



struction or reconstruction of the vagina), mastectomy (removal of one or both breasts), a trial is necessary before they are administered the vaccine, he said.

Incidentally, a proposal to study the factors hindering COVID-19 inoculation and immunological response post-vaccination on 500 transgenders in the city by a team of doctors led by Bhowmick to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) was rejected.

West Bengal's total transgender

population is nearly 30500. Sukanta Das alias Chorki, a transgender from Mullickpur at Baruipur in the southern fringes of the city, said that she is yet to take the vaccine.

"Tell me why should I get inoculated. There was no clinical trial conducted on any of us to find out whether it has any adverse effect on our body system. Many of us have to take regular medicines and I am one of them." Debi Acharya, another transgender in Malda

town, said that though she was initially reluctant to take the vaccine, she understood the need of it after attending a few awareness programmes.

A few transgenders in the state's Murshidabad district as well as in the city said that they are being "threatened" by the administration to take the vaccine or face social boycott. They claimed that they had also been told that their monthly rations would be stopped if they do not take the vaccine.

All UP schools, colleges to have Aarogya Vatika

Aarogya Vatika is a special health corner where herbs and plants with high medicinal value will be planted in various city parks in different areas to make citizens aware about their health benefits

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sept 19: All educational institutions in Uttar Pradesh will now have an Aarogya Vatika to make students aware of the importance of medicinal plants.

According to deputy chief minister, Dinesh Sharma, "Every household in our country has been using plants with medicinal properties since centuries. Some even worship them. Though these age-old customs and usage of these plants had been forgotten by many. After Covid, people understood their importance again and have started using them in their daily life. Our aim is to make the students understand this too and begin Aarogya Vatika initiative in every school."

R.A. Ram, scientist at the Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture (CISH), said that the public could grow plants at home through kitchen gardens and terrace gardens and waste could be converted into compost.

Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP) scientist Rajesh Verma said the pa-



tients who have been suffering from fever should consume 'Kalmegh' (green chiretta).

Similarly, those who are suffering from Ulcer or Sciatica can use Sarpagandha (Indian Snakeroot), which can be easily planted and grown at home. Consuming the plants with medicinal properties also benefits in controlling diabetes and obesity, he added.

Kolkata safest city among metros: NCRB report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Sept 19: With the crime rate per one lakh population dipping down below 110 and recording the lowest number of serious crimes like rape and murder, Kolkata is considered to be the safest among the metropolitan cities in the country, as per the latest report by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

According to the latest report published by the NCRB, Delhi recorded the highest cognizable offences with a crime rate of 1,506.9 per one lakh population followed by Chennai that recorded a rate of 1,016.4.

When the other two metropolitan cities like Mumbai and Bengaluru recorded a rate of 272.4 and 234.9, Kolkata has a crime rate of 109.9 in cognizable offences. Not only among the metros but the city recorded the lowest crime rate among the 19 major cities of the country.



The report also stated that the number of crimes committed in Kolkata has gone down compared to figures of 2018 and 2019. In 2018, about 21,481 crimes were committed across the city whereas the figure stood at 19,638 in 2019 and 18,277 in 2020.

In case of murders, Kolkata recorded only 53 cases whereas

Delhi recorded 461 cases - the highest among all the cities followed by Bengaluru (179 cases), Chennai (150 cases) and Mumbai (148 cases). Kozhikode with only 5 cases and Kochi with 9 cases are the two only two cities - both in Kerala - that recorded less than 10 cases in the year.

As far as crimes against women

are concerned the city also performed better than other major cities of the country. Compared to the other metropolitan cities, the crime rate against women in Kolkata is also less and stands at 29.5. In terms of crimes against women, Lucknow is the most unsafe city for women with a rate of 190.7 per lakh population. The re-

THE CITY OF JOY
■ IN OVERALL CRIME RATE, THE CITY HAS FARED MUCH BETTER THAN THE OTHER METROS OF THE COUNTRY
■ WHILE IN CHENNAI THE OVERALL CRIME RATE -- 1,937.1 -- IN DELHI IT IS 1,608.6, THE CRIME RATE IN KOLKATA IS ONLY 129.5
■ THE OTHER TWO METROS -- MUMBAI AND BENGALURU HAVE RECORDED THE OVERALL CRIME RATE OF 318.6 AND 401.9 RESPECTIVELY

port of crime against women in Lucknow is 2,636 against only 13.8 lakh population. In 2020, only 2001 complaints were received regarding crimes against women in Kolkata against a population of 67.9 lakh. The rate of crimes against women in Delhi is 129.1 per cent. In 2020, across Delhi, 9,782 complaints were registered against

75.8 lakh population, stated the report.

The rate of deaths due to negligence in road accidents is also much lower in Kolkata compared to other cities. In 2020, the number of cases registered for death due to negligence in road accidents stood at 204. About 218 people died in such accidents. The parentage of fatal road accidents due to negligence is 1.4 percent which is the lowest among all metropolitan cities. The report also reflects that in 2020 no hit-and-run cases happened in Kolkata.

Comparing the figures, Delhi is the highest in terms of the number of fatal accidents due to negligence with 1,130 cases with 1,156 victims. In terms of fatal road accidents due to negligence, Jaipur is the most unsafe city with 16.5 per cent of such cases. The highest number of hit-and-run cases among the metropolitan cities is recorded in Delhi with 514 cases where 519 people died.

of the day quote

There are two Assembly bypolls (Hanagal and Sindagi constituencies), legislative council elections and a few panchayat elections. We, seniors, have discussed about them. We will take every election seriously right from the local-level elections to Parliamentary elections

BASAVARAJ S BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

I hope that Captain Amarinder Singh will not take any such step which will harm the Congress party. Captain Sahib himself said the party had kept him as the Chief Minister for nine-and-a-half years. He has served the people of Punjab by working to the best of his capacity

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

Congratulations to Shri Charanjit Singh Channi Ji for the new responsibility. We must continue to fulfill the promises made to the people of Punjab. Their trust is of paramount importance

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

9 of family killed in road mishap

Raipur: Nine members of a family, including four women and a one-year-old girl, were killed and seven others injured Sunday after the autorickshaw they were travelling in collided with an SUV in Chhattisgarh's Kondagaon district, police said. The accident occurred near Bargaon turn under the Farasgaon police station limits, over 200 km away from Raipur, when the occupants of the autorickshaw were returning to their native place Pandeaath after attending a funeral in Godma village, an official said. The SUV was heading towards Jagdalpur. Seven occupants in the autorickshaw, including the driver, were killed on the spot.

Two cops held for taking bribe

Srinagar: A middle rung police officer and a head constable were arrested Sunday for taking bribe in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district. Sources in the anti-corruption bureau (ACB) said station house officer (SHO) GM Rather and head constable Mohammad Afzal of police station Awantipora in Anantnag district were arrested for taking a bribe of ₹8,000.

Officers to check stubble burning

Chandigarh: In a bid to curb the menace of stubble burning during the paddy harvesting season, the Punjab government Sunday announced it would appoint 8,500 nodal officers for the current paddy growing villages, identified as hotspots, where paddy stubble was being traditionally put on fire. According to the Punjab Pollution Control Board's Member Secretary Krunesh Garg, the directions have already been issued to the Deputy Commissioners concerned to give special attention to the hotspot villages.

Elephant tramples man to death

Korba: A 50-year-old man was trampled to death by a wild elephant in Chhattisgarh's Surajpur district Sunday, taking the count of such fatalities in the state to 11 so far this month, a forest official said. The incident took place at around 2 am at Badma village under Pratappur forest range, he said. As per the preliminary information, there was a folk dance programme in the village and after watching the event, the victim, identified as Veersai Paikra, was going to drop a girl of his village to her home when the incident happened, he said.



Successive governments in Uttarakhand have been devoid of good intentions and have only looted its resources

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

COPPER MAHSEER IS SIKKIM'S STATE FISH

Sikkim government has declared endangered Neolissochilus hexagonolepis, commonly known as Chocolate or Copper Mahseer and locally named as Katley, as the "State Fish"



#MeToo shadow over Punjab CM-designate

The alleged controversy came to light in October 2018 when Channi was the Technical Education Minister, and then Chief Minister Amarinder Singh had said the matter was brought to his notice and that it was 'resolved' to the satisfaction of the woman officer concerned



Charanjit Singh Channi

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 19: The BJP Sunday took a swipe at the Congress leader and Punjab-CM designate Charanjit Singh Channi citing reported allegations that he had sent an inappropriate text to an IAS officer in 2018.

BJP leader Amit Malviya, who is its IT department head, tweeted, "Congress's CM pick Charanjit Channi faces action in a 3-year-old MeToo case. He had allegedly sent an inappropriate text to a woman IAS officer in 2018. It was covered up but the case resurfaced when Punjab Women's Commission sent notice. Well done, Rahul." The issue had resurfaced in May this

year when Punjab women panel chief threatened to go on a hunger strike if the state government failed to apprise her within a week of its stand on the "inappropriate text" message allegedly sent by Channi, who was then a minister in the Amarinder Singh government.

Punjab Women Commission chairperson Manisha Gulati had said she had written to the chief secretary seeking the government's action taken report.

Malviya also posted a story reported in May this year that said that outgoing Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's rivals within the party had accused him of "hound-ing" them with old cases.

Pump action guns to shoot down low-flying drones

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: Security forces that guard vital installations, airports and even their own camps have been directed to use rubber bullets bearing pump action guns to neutralise low-flying drones till an appropriate technology is found to thwart such aerial attacks, official sources said.

Also, forces like the Border Security Force (BSF) have recently installed an improvised iron pole mounted light machine gun (LMG) observation post at some of its border deployments against Pakistan to take a 360 degrees aim and shoot down drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) flying at a high altitude, they said.

A latest blueprint prepared by central security agencies to counter the emerging drone threat has been reviewed by PTI and it directs security forces to use PAGs (pump ac-

tion guns) that are already available in their armoury for "neutralising any low-flying UAV".

Following the directive, the central forces deployed for internal security have begun allocating PAGs to their units vulnerable to drone threats, including those deployed for anti-Naxal operations.

"Till a complete technology solution is found for effectively checking and neutralising a drone attack, the security forces have been asked to use what is available with them, like the PAGs. "Those who do not have adequate numbers of these non-lethal weapons have been asked to procure them," a senior Union home ministry officer said. He said the security units deployed for counter-terrorist duties in Kashmir and those guarding airport boundaries have also been asked to provide these arms to their sentries deployed for observation and protection of the campus.



Representational image



PM trimming his beard

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had confessed to a journalist once that his favourite subject in school was dramatics. Perhaps, this might explain his habit of throwing surprises. During the lockdown Modi sported long hair and an unusually long beard; perhaps he didn't opt for a barber following Covid protocol. But many said Modi wants to project the

image of an ascetic by donning the look of a 'fakir' while others said he wants to project himself as the saintly nation-head who helped pave the way for the Ram Mandir — a "true Ram bhakt". Others linked it to a vow not to trim his beard until the pandemic is over. A few felt the PM is going in for a huge image makeover while others said he is setting himself up for something big — to turn himself into a demigod, much like Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. A few even compared Modi's looks to that of Shivaji Maharaj. But the PM has proved all of them wrong as he has slowly started trimming his long hair and a long beard. After his August 15 speech from the Ramparts of the Red Fort, the trimming journey has rather been faster. A close look of his latest video released by the PMO while reviewing Covid pandemic September 11 clearly showed his

trimmed beard and hairs. With Covid threat receding and restrictions easing, it seems that the PM's barber is back. During the pandemic, the PM kept the company of only four people including his cook, a masseur and a PMO officer (not Principal Secretary).

A PM without a coterie

Modi is perhaps the only Prime Minister of Independent India who doesn't have a coterie or a close circuit around him. Even those who are around cannot claim that they can get things done. No person; be a Minister, bureaucrat, friend, an industrialist or a family member can claim he can get things done. Even those having access to him dare not take liberties. Those who had free access to him in his first stint are

not even around him. The usual refrain in the past was "I have spoken to the PM... it will be done." This word is unheard in the Modi dispensation. It is not as if the country didn't see honest and competent Prime Ministers who worked for 18 hours a day. There were Prime Ministers like Lal Bahadur Shastri or Morarji Desai who had no baggage either. But they didn't have long tenures in power like Modi. More than seven years as PM, understanding Modi is still very complex. He has no family, hates to mingle with the media and didn't address a single press conference in seven years. Modi has established complete sway over the government, party and even the mother organization, RSS. After the death of Arun Jaitley in August 2019, he is neither compelled nor obliged to consult anybody either. Many think this government is run by two people

PM Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. But they are sadly mistaken. Modi is his own master. If Rajnath Singh as Home Minister was clueless about many key appointments despite being the only member of the Cabinet Committee of Appointments (ACC), the Home Ministry isn't in the know of all key appointments either. This remains an exclusive domain of the DoPT under the PM.

PMSBY: Pvt cos make a killing

The private Insurance companies have made a killing of almost ₹10,000 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) during the two years running in 2018-19 and 2019-20. The Data revealed that the farmers and governments paid a premium to these private companies to the tune of ₹31905 crore during the

Mumbaikars bid adieu to Ganesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 19: A total of 2,185 idols of Lord Ganesh and Goddess Gauri were immersed till Sunday afternoon in various water bodies in Mumbai as curtains came down on the 10-day Ganpati festival held amid various restrictions imposed for the second year in a row in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, a civic official said.

No untoward incident was reported till now during the immersions, he said. The festival, which in normal times used to witness large gatherings and long queues on streets outside public mandals which host the celebrations, began September 10.

This year, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) set up artificial lakes at 173 locations in the city, as well as idol collection centres and mobile immersion sites at various places to avoid crowding in the wake of the pandemic, the BMC official said.

Besides, there were 73 locations of immersion at natural water bodies in the city civic limits and at all these places necessary arrangements were made by the BMC, he said. Till 3 PM, 85 idols of 'sarvajani' (public) mandals, 2,069 household Ganesh idols and 31 idols of Goddess Gauri were immersed in various water bodies here. Out of these idols, 29 public pandals, 857 household idols and ten of Goddess Gauri were immersed in the artificial ponds, the official said. BMC also deployed 715 lifeguards at various natural and artificial immersion sites.

ACCIDENTS IN 2020

INDIA SAW 328 DAILY AVG DEATHS DUE TO NEGLIGENCE IN ROAD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: India recorded 1.20 lakh cases of "deaths due to negligence relating to road accidents" in 2020 - 328 people losing their lives every day on an average - despite Covid-19 lockdowns, according to government data.

As many as 3.92 lakh lives have been lost in three years in deaths due to negligence related to road accidents, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) revealed in its annual 'Crime India' report for 2020.

While 1.20 lakh such deaths were recorded in 2020, the figures stood at 1.36 lakh in 2019 and 1.35 lakh in 2018, the data showed.

The country also logged 1.35 lakh cases of "hit and run" since 2018, the report of the NCRB, which functions under the Union Home Ministry, showed. In 2020 alone, there were 41,196 cases of "hit and run" while there were 47,504 such cases in 2019 and 47,028 in 2018, the report showed. On an average, there were 112 cases of "hit and run" reported across the country every day in the past year, according to the data. The cases of causing "hurt" by rash or negligent driving on public way stood at 1.30 lakh in 2020, 1.60 lakh in 2019 and 1.66 lakh in 2018, while the cases of "grievous hurt" stood at 85,920, 1.12 lakh and 1.08 lakh, respectively, the data showed. Meanwhile, 52 cases of deaths due to negligence relating to rail accidents were recorded across the country in 2020, from 55 in 2019 and 35 in 2018, the report showed.

During 2020, India also logged 133 cases of "deaths due to medical negligence", up from 201 in 2019 and 218 in 2018, the NCRB data showed.

FEARLESS ACT



An Army personnel shows his skills during the celebration of Swarnim Vijay Varsh, at Polo Ground in Jaipur PTI PHOTO

international

of the day quote

Following a series of military threats, the PRC is weaponising trade by announcing an immediate ban on Taiwan's custard & wax apples



JOSEPH WU | TAIWANESE FOREIGN MINISTER

The foreigners could not solve the problems for the people of Afghanistan, and we do not accept the continuing presence and role of foreigners in the country



EBRAHIM RAISI | IRANIAN PRESIDENT

It is important that the international community finds the necessary direction (and) the necessary ways to ensure the functioning of Afghanistan



FILIPPO GRANDI | UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

SHORT TAKES

Israel arrests 2 prison escapees

Jerusalem: Israeli forces Sunday arrested the last two of six Palestinian prisoners who escaped a maximum-security Israeli prison two weeks ago, closing an intense, embarrassing episode that exposed deep security flaws in Israel and turned the fugitives into Palestinian heroes. The Israeli military said the two men surrendered in Jenin, their hometown in the occupied West Bank, after they were surrounded at a hideout that had been located with the help of "accurate intelligence." It said the men, along with two others who allegedly assisted them, were taken for questioning. Palestinian media reported that clashes erupted in Jenin when Israeli troops entered the city. But a spokesman for Israeli police, said the two escapees, Munadil Nafayat and Iham Kamamji, were arrested without resistance.

Volcano erupts on Spanish island

Madrid: A volcano on Spain's Atlantic Ocean island of La Palma erupted Sunday after a week-long buildup of seismic activity, prompting authorities to speed up evacuations for some 1,000 people. The Canary Islands Volcanology Institute reported the eruption on Cumbre Vieja, which last erupted in 1971. Huge plumes of black-and-white smoke shot out from a point in the volcanic ridge where scientists had been closely following the accumulation of molten lava below the surface. Tinges of red could be seen at the bottom of the black jets that shot rocks into the air. La Palma, with a population of 85,000, is one of eight islands in Spain's Canary Islands archipelago. At their nearest point to Africa, they are 100 km (60 miles) from Morocco.

Voters choose new HK electors

Hong Kong: Select Hong Kong residents voted for members of the Election Committee that will choose the city's leader in the first polls Sunday following reforms meant to ensure candidates with Beijing loyalty. The Election Committee will select 40 of 90 lawmakers in the city's legislature during elections in December, as well as elect the Hong Kong leader during polls in March next year. In May, the legislature amended Hong Kong's electoral laws to ensure that only "patriots" — people who are loyal to China and the semi-autonomous territory — will rule the city. The committee also was expanded to 1,500 members, from 1,200, and the number of direct voters for committee seats was reduced from about 246,000 to less than 8,000.



I no longer want to talk about climate change. I want to talk about the climate crisis, it's already here

KYRIAKOS MITSOTAKIS | GREEK PRIME MINISTER

MANNY PACQUIAO TO RUN FOR PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT

Philippine boxing icon and senator Manny Pacquiao says he will run for president in the 2022 elections. Pacquiao accepted the nomination of his PDP-Laban party Sunday, pledging to honestly serve the Filipino people.



Aus defends scrapping of French submarine deal

MACRON TO TALK TO BIDEN AMID DIPLOMATIC CRISIS OVER SUBMARINES

AGENCIES

Canberra, Sept 19: France would have known Australia had "deep and grave concerns" that a submarine fleet the French were building would not meet Australian needs, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Sunday after the contract's cancellation set off a diplomatic crisis.

France accused Australia of concealing its intentions to back out of the 90 billion Australian dollar (USD 66 billion) contract for French majority state-owned Naval Group to build 12 conventional diesel-electric submarines.

President Joe Biden revealed last week a new alliance including Australia and Britain that would deliver an Australian fleet of at least eight nuclear-powered submarines.

Morrison blamed the switch on a deteriorating strategic environment in the Indo-Pacific. He has not specifically referred to China's massive military buildup, which has gained pace in recent years.

"The capability that the Attack



class submarines were going to provide was not what Australia needed to protect our sovereign interests," Morrison said.

"They would have had every reason to know that we have deep and grave concerns that the capability being delivered by the Attack class submarine was not going to meet our strategic interests and we have made very clear that we would be making a decision based

on our strategic national interest," he added, referring to the French government.

France responded to the contract cancellation, which Morrison has said will cost his government at least USD 1.7 billion, by recalling its ambassadors from Australia and the United States.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian Saturday denounced what he called the "duplicité, disdain and lies" surrounding the sudden end of the contract and said France was now questioning the strength of the alliance.

Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron will speak in the coming days with President Joe Biden in what will be their first contact since a major diplomatic crisis erupted between France and the United States over a submarine deal with Australia, an official said Sunday.

The phone call is at the request of Biden, government spokesman Gabriel Attal said, adding that there was "shock" and "anger" at first. But now it's time to try to move forward, he said.

Taliban-run Kabul municipality to female workers: Stay home

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, Sept 19: Female employees in the Kabul city government have been told to stay home, with work only allowed for those who cannot be replaced by men, the interim mayor of Afghanistan's capital said Sunday, detailing the latest restrictions on women by the new Taliban rulers.

The decision to prevent most female city workers from returning to their jobs is another sign that the Taliban, who overran Kabul last month, are enforcing their harsh interpretation of Islam despite initial promises by some that they would be tolerant and inclusive. In their previous rule in the 1990s, the Taliban had barred girls and women from schools, jobs and public life.

In recent days, the new Taliban government issued several decrees rolling back the rights of girls and women. It told female middle- and high school students that they could not return to school for the time being, while boys in those grades resumed studies this weekend. Female university students were informed that studies would take place in gender-segregated settings from now on, and that they must abide by a strict Islamic dress code. Under the U.S.-backed government deposed by the Taliban, university studies had been co-ed, for the most part.

Friday, the Taliban shut down the Women's Affairs Ministry, replacing it with a ministry for the "propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice" and tasked with enforcing Islamic law.

Sunday, just over a dozen women staged a protest outside the ministry, holding up signs calling for the participation of women in public life. "A society in which women are not active is (sic) dead society," one sign read.



Britain's Prince Charles, centre right and Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, arrive for a service to mark the 81st Anniversary of the Battle of Britain at Westminster Abbey, in London Sunday.

World leaders return to UN with focus on Covid, climate

REUTERS

New York, Sept 19: World leaders are returning to the United Nations in New York this week with a focus on boosting efforts to fight both climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, which last year forced them to send video statements for the annual gathering.

As the coronavirus still rages amid an inequitable vaccine rollout, about a third of the 193 UN states are planning to again send videos, but presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers for the remainder are due to travel to the United States, reports Reuters.

The United States tried to dissuade leaders from coming to New York in a bid to stop the UN General Assembly from becoming a "super-

spreader event," although President Joe Biden will address the assembly in person, his first UN visit since taking office. A so-called UN honour system means that anyone entering the assembly hall effectively declares they are vaccinated, but they do not have to show proof. This system will be broken when the first country speaks - Brazil. Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro is a vaccine sceptic, who last week declared that he does not need the shot because he is already immune after being infected with COVID-19.

Should he change his mind, New York City has set up a van outside the United Nations for the week to supply free testing and free shots of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told Reuters that the dis-

Gunmen kill cop protecting polio team in Pakistan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Peshawar, Sept 19: Gunmen on a motorcycle Sunday shot dead a police constable guarding polio vaccination workers in rural northwest Pakistan, police said.

Senior officer Khalid Suhail said the attack happened in the village of Dhal Behzadi about 75 kilometers (47 miles) south of Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Members of the vaccination team were unhurt, he said. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the assault.

The attack came on the third day of a five-day polio vaccination drive across the province. It's part of a nationwide programme to eradicate the crippling disease by the end of 2021. So far this year, no new polio cases have been reported in Pakistan.

Pakistan and neighbouring Afghanistan are the only two remaining countries in the world where polio is endemic, after Nigeria last year was declared free of the virus. Aimal Khan, provincial spokesman for the anti-polio programme, said the goal of the five-day drive is to vaccinate 6.24 million children up to age 5 across the province. Nearly 30,340 teams of trained workers were going home to home to administer the vaccines, he said.

Pro-Putin party poised to win Russian election



REUTERS

Moscow, Sept 19: Russians voted Sunday in the final stretch of a three-day parliamentary election that the ruling party is expected to win after a sweeping crackdown that crushed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's movement and barred opponents from running. The expected win by the ruling United Russia party will be used by the Kremlin as proof of support for President Vladimir Putin despite malaise over years of faltering living standards.

The party that backs the 68-year-old leader faces a ratings slump, state pollsters say, but remains more popular than its closest rivals on the ballot, the Communist Party and nationalist LDPR party, which often back the Kremlin.

United Russia holds nearly three quarters of the State Duma's 450 seats. That dominance last year helped the Kremlin pass constitutional reforms that allow Putin to run for two more terms as president after 2024, potentially staying in power until 2036. "If United Russia manages (to win), our country can expect another five years of poverty, five years of repressions, five lost years," ran a message to supporters on Navalny's blog this week.

Navalny's allies were barred from running after his movement was banned in June as extremist. Other opposition figures allege they were targeted with dirty tricks campaigns.

A Communist strawberry tycoon says he was unfairly barred, while a liberal opposition politician in St Petersburg says two identically-named "spoiler" candidates are running against him to confuse his voters.

The Kremlin denies a politically-driven crackdown and says individuals are prosecuted for breaking the law. Both it and United Russia deny any role in the registration process for candidates.

Navalny's camp is promoting a tactical voting ploy against the ruling party that amounts to supporting the candidate most likely to defeat United Russia in a given electoral district. Authorities have attempted to block the initiative online. "One day we will live in a Russia where it will be possible to vote for good candidates with different political platforms," Navalny ally Leonid Volkov wrote on Telegram messenger.

"And Navalny's party will vye for a seat in parliament in fair and competitive elections. But for now, 'smart voting' is voting for Navalny."

Since voting began on Friday, Google, Apple and Telegram messenger have limited some access to the tactical voting campaign, leading activists to accuse them of caving to pressure from the government. Apple and Google have not responded to the allegation. The Central Election Commission reported voter turnout at 35.7% as of 10:00 am Moscow time Sunday.

In Moscow, the tactical voting campaign spearheaded by Navalny — who is serving two-and-a-half years in prison for alleged parole violations — has recommended his supporters vote for politicians like the Communist Party's Mikhail Lobanov.

"People see the glaring inequalities, they feel the effects of economic policy and the swell of repression and respond with dissatisfaction accordingly," Lobanov said.



cussions around how many travelling diplomats might have been immunised illustrated "how dramatic the inequality is today in relation to vaccination." He is pushing for a global plan to vaccinate 70 per cent of the world by the first half

of next year. Out of 5.7 billion doses of coronavirus vaccines administered around the world, only 2 per cent have been in Africa. Biden will host a virtual meeting from Washington with leaders and chief executives on Wednesday that aims

to boost the distribution of vaccines globally. Demonstrating US COVID-19 concerns about the UN gathering, Biden will be in New York only for about 24 hours, meeting with Guterres on Monday and making his first UN address on Tuesday, directly after Bolsonaro.

His UN envoy, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, said Biden would "speak to our top priorities: ending the COVID-19 pandemic; combating climate change ... and defending human rights, democracy, and the international rules-based order."

Due to the pandemic, UN delegations are restricted to much smaller numbers and most events on the sidelines will be virtual or a hybrid of virtual and in-person. Among other topics that ministers are expected to discuss during the week are Afghanistan and Iran.

Trailblazing tourist trip to orbit ends with splashdown

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Canaveral, Sept 19: Four space tourists safely ended their trailblazing trip to orbit Sunday with a splashdown in the Atlantic off the Florida coast.

Their SpaceX capsule parachuted into the ocean just before sunset, not far from where their chartered flight began three days earlier. The all-amateur crew was the first to circle the world without a professional astronaut. The billionaire who paid undisclosed millions for the trip and his three guests wanted to show that ordinary people could blast into orbit by themselves, and SpaceX founder Elon Musk took them on as the company's first rocket-riding tourists. "Your mission has shown the

world that space is for all of us," SpaceX Mission Control radioed. "It was a heck of a ride for us ... Just getting started," replied trip sponsor Jared Isaacman, referring to more private flights on the horizon.

SpaceX's fully automated Dragon capsule reached an unusually high altitude of 585 kilometers after Wednesday night's liftoff. Surpassing the International Space Station by 160 kilometers, the passengers savoured views of Earth through a big bubble-shaped window added to the top of the capsule.

The four streaked back through the atmosphere early Saturday evening, the first space travellers to end their flight in the Atlantic since Apollo 9 in 1969. SpaceX's two previous crew splashdowns



— carrying astronauts for NASA — were in the Gulf of Mexico.

Within a few minutes, a pair of SpaceX boats pulled up alongside the bobbing capsule. It was hoisted on the recovery ship where the

hatch was opened. The four were due to have medical checks before going to Kennedy Space Center by helicopter for a reunion with their families.

This time, NASA was little more

than an encouraging bystander; its only tie being the Kennedy launch pad once used for the Apollo moonshots and shuttle crews, but now leased by SpaceX. Isaacman, 38, an entrepreneur and accomplished pilot, aimed to raise USD 200 million for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Donating USD 100 million himself, he held a lottery for one of the four seats. He also held a competition for clients of his Allentown, Pennsylvania payment-processing business, Shift4 Payments.

Joining him on the flight were Hayley Arceneaux, 29, a St. Jude physician assistant who was treated at the Memphis, Tennessee hospital nearly two decades ago for bone cancer, and contest winners Chris Sembroski, 42, a data engineer in

Everett, Washington, and Sian Proctor, 51, a community college educator, scientist and artist from Tempe, Arizona. Strangers until March, they spent six months training and preparing for potential emergencies during the flight, dubbed Inspiration4. Most everything appeared to go well, leaving them time to chat with St. Jude patients, conduct medical tests on themselves, ring the closing bell for the New York Stock Exchange, and do some drawing and ukulele playing.

Arceneaux, the youngest American in space and the first with a prosthesis, assured her patients, "I was a little girl going through cancer treatment just like a lot of you, and if I can do this, you can do this."

of the day **quote**

We are setting up a new plant in North Gujarat. The new facility will come up on 5-acre land, which is located close to our existing manufacturing unit

HARESH KARAMCHANDANI | MD AND CEO, HYFUN FOODS

We are developing a pan-India integrated alert system which can send out alerts across all mediums at one go in an emergency situation. It will be deployed by NDMA

RAJKUMAR UPADHYAY | CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CDOT

Seeing the demand in the next 1-2 years, we are likely to invest around Rs 150 crore in the coming six months, which we will be utilised in ramping up our technology, infrastructure and higher localization

YATIN GUPTA | CHAIRMAN AND MD, WARDWIZARD INNOVATIONS & MOBILITY

SHORT TAKES

Airtel launches new digital savings variant

Bhubaneswar: Subsequent to the launch of its flagship 'Rewards 123' savings account, Airtel Payments Bank announced the launch of 'Rewards 123 Plus' digital savings account variant. Customers can now digitally open or upgrade to Rewards 123 Plus through the banking section on the Airtel Thanks app. The savings account customers will also get 6% interest on balances between Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh, zero minimum balance, and unlimited deposits with auto-sweep facility. Once the customer has opened or upgraded to Rewards123Plus, they can log in to the Disney+ Hotstar website or app using their registered number to activate the subscription.

Fuel prices stable amidst volatility

New Delhi: Auto fuel prices in the country have maintained stability amidst volatility in global oil prices with crude on the rise again. The oil marketing companies (OMCs) Sunday kept pump prices of auto fuels petrol and diesel unchanged, the 14th consecutive day of no revision, as they preferred to wait and watch the global oil situation before making any revision in prices. After touching \$74 a barrel mark couple of weeks back and then falling, benchmark Brent crude prices have bounced back to reach over \$75 a barrel now.

Copper import rises 26% in Q1

New Delhi: India's copper import which increased 26 per cent to 60,766 tonne in June quarter of 2021-22 is expected to rise further in the remaining part of the financial year with economic activity witnessing a strong recovery from Covid-related restrictions, International Copper Association said. Country's copper imports may touch 3 lakh tonne as economic growth picks up momentum despite adequate domestic capacity to meet the rising demand, it said.

Amazon adds 3 more languages

New Delhi: E-commerce major Amazon Sunday said sellers will now be able to register on the Amazon.in marketplace and manage their online business in three more languages - Malayalam, Telugu and Bengali. The move comes ahead of the festive season and will benefit thousands of Amazon sellers, a statement said.



For rich people, you (auto makers) offer eight airbags, and for economy model cars (used by lower middle-class people), you will offer only two-three airbags. How come?

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

RETRO-STYLED HARLEY BIKES SOON

Leading two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp is going full throttle to launch a Harley-Davidson model with retro styling as it looks to enter a very profitable segment in the premium motorcycle space, according to a senior company official



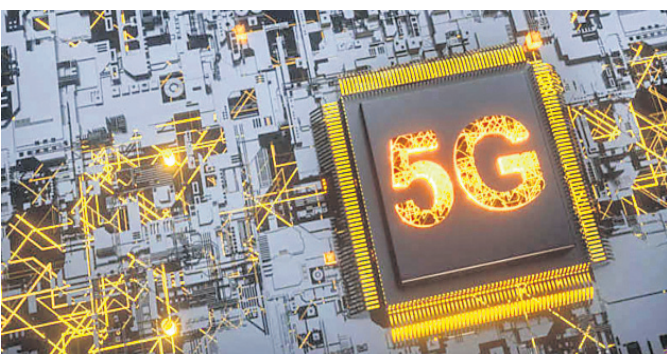
Vi CLAIMS TO RECORD PEAK 5G SPEED OF 3.7 GBPS

For 5G trials, Vi has been allocated high-frequency bands like 26 gigahertz by the Department of Telecommunications

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: Debt-ridden telecom operator Vodafone Idea Sunday claimed to have recorded a peak speed of 3.7 gigabit per second

(gbps), highest by any operator in India, during 5G trials in Pune. The company also claimed to have recorded 1.5 gbps download speed in the mid-band spectrum in Gandhinagar and Pune. In Pune city, Vi has deployed its 5G trial in a lab set-up of an end-to-end captive network of Cloud Core, new generation Transport and Radio Access Network. In this trial, Vi has achieved a peak speed in excess of 3.7 Gbps with very low latency on the mmWave



(millimetre wave) spectrum band, Vi said in the statement. The DoT had approved applications of Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone in May, and MTNL later. The permission has been granted for six-month trials with telecom gear makers Ericsson, Nokia, Samsung and C-DOT. All the private players are providing 4G services across the country at present and gearing up for 5G. State-owned BSNL is yet to roll out 4G across India.

Vodafone Idea Chief Technology Officer Jagbir Singh said, "We are pleased with the speed and latency results in the initial stages of the 5G trials on the government allocated 5G spectrum bands." He added that having established a robust 4G network across India, delivering the fastest 4G speeds and a 5G-ready network, Vi is now testing the next-gen 5G technology to be able to bring a truly digital experience for enterprises and consumers in India, in the future.

US trade official slams Mastercard ban

AGENCIES

Washington, Sept 19: A senior US trade official privately criticised India's July decision to ban Mastercard Inc from issuing new cards, calling it a "draconian" move that caused "panic", according to US government emails seen by agencies. The documents show frustration within the US government after Reserve Bank of India (RBI) banned new card issuance by American Express and Diners Club International in April, then took similar action against Mastercard in July. The RBI acted against Mastercard because it was found to be non-compliant with the 2018 rules. The bans do not affect existing customers. The ban on Mastercard - a top payment network in India alongside Visa - triggered a flurry of emails between US officials in Washington and India as they discussed next steps with Mastercard, including approaching the RBI, the government emails show. "We've started hearing from stakeholders about some pretty



The RBI has info they need and are hopeful that they will respond appropriately. If the RBI doesn't change course, I'm sure the panic will resume

BRENDAN A LYNCH | DEPUTY ASSISTANT US TRADE REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

- The ban on Mastercard triggered a flurry of emails between US officials in Washington and India
- The ban also upsets India's financial sector as Indian partner banks struggle to swiftly partner with new networks to offer cards
- The company said that it had submitted an additional audit report to the RBI before the ban took effect July 22
- 3rd US company to face RBI ban after American Express and Diners Club International

draconian measures that the RBI has taken over the past couple days," Brendan A Lynch, the deputy assistant US trade representative for South and Central Asia, wrote July 16, two days after the Mastercard announcement. "It sounds like some others (Amex, Diners) may have been impacted by similar actions recently,"

wrote Mr Lynch, asking his colleagues in India to get in touch with their central bank contacts "to see what's going on". Mr Lynch, spokesperson for the Office of the US Trade Representative and the US Embassy in New Delhi did not respond to requests for comment. The US government has not publicly com-

mented on the Mastercard ban. A Mastercard spokesman told agencies, "We've had very constructive engagements with the Indian and US governments over the past few weeks and appreciate the support of both." This includes discussions with the RBI, and Mastercard has "made good progress" as it looks to resolve the situation quickly, he said.

FESTIVE SEASON

Cos expecting big bang sales

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: The consumer durable industry is expecting double-digit growth in the festive season sales this year, despite inflationary pressure on inputs that led to price hike twice in the year, shortage of components such as chipsets and a threat of a third wave of the pandemic. The makers such as Panasonic and Godrej Appliances are expecting a pent-up demand and good growth in premium products across categories like large-screen TVs, front-load washing machines, and bigger capacity refrigerators. The companies are keeping their supply chain and inventory ready for the festive season, which starts in the North and other parts from Dussehra and goes up to Diwali and usually accounts for up to 30 per cent of their sales in a month. "We are seeing a steady rise in demand for value-proposition appliances such as smart 4K Android TVs, connected range of ACs (HU series), refrigerators, washing machines, microwaves and other lifestyle appliances," Panasonic India President and CEO Manish Sharma told PTI. He further added that due to the



return of demand, the company has seen a growth of 25 per cent in August 2021 as against last year. We are hoping to maintain the growth momentum through festive season to make up for losses due to the pandemic. Godrej Appliances Business Head and Executive Vice-President Kamal Nandi said that despite concerns around the third Covid-19 wave, double vaccination should help in driving positive consumer sentiment. "Festive season usually contributes 30 per cent of annual sales for us. We are seeing encouraging signs of demand revival and are targeting a double-digit growth rate of 20 per cent plus during festive," he said.

Implementation of Labour codes unlikely this fiscal

Under the new wages code, allowances are capped at 50 per cent. This means half of the gross pay of an employee would be basic wages

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: The four labour codes are unlikely to be implemented this fiscal in view of slow progress on the drafting of rules by the states and also for political reasons like elections in Uttar Pradesh, a source said. The implementation of these laws assumes significance because once these are implemented there would be reduction in take-home pay of employees and firms have to bear higher provident fund liability. "The Ministry of Labour is ready with the rules under the four labour codes. But the states have been slow in drafting and finalising those under new codes. Besides, the government is not keen to implement the four codes due to political reasons, which are mainly elections in Uttar Pradesh (due in February 2022



onwards)," the source said. The four codes have been passed by Parliament. But for implementation of these codes, rules under these must be notified by central as well as state governments for enforcing those in respective jurisdictions. Once the wages code comes into force, there will be significant changes in the way basic pay and provident fund of employees are calculated. Provident fund contribution is calculated as a percentage of basic wage, which includes basic pay and dearness allowance. Labour is a concurrent subject under the Constitution of India and therefore both the Centre and states have to notify rules under

these four codes to make them the laws of the land in their respective jurisdictions. According to the source, some states have worked on draft rules on four labour codes. These states are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Odisha, Punjab, Gujarat, Karnataka and Uttarakhand. Besides, the new industrial relation code would also improve ease of doing business by allowing firms with up to 300 workers to go ahead for lay-offs, retrenchment and closure without government permission. At present all firms with up to 100 employees are exempted from government permission for lay-off, retrenchment and closure.

Most FDI proposals from nations sharing border with India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: The government has received maximum foreign direct investment (FDI) proposals in three departments -- electronics and IT, industry and internal trade, and heavy industries -- from countries sharing land border with India, an official said. In April 2020, the government had made its prior approval mandatory for foreign investments from countries that share land border with India to curb opportunistic takeovers of domestic firms following the Covid-19 pandemic. Countries which share land borders with India are China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan. As per that decision, FDI proposals from these countries need government approval for investments in India in any sector.

Besides electronics and IT, industry and internal trade, and heavy industries, the ministry of new and renewable energy and department of pharmaceuticals have also received several proposals

The major sectors under which these FDI proposals mainly came included manufacturing of heavy machinery; automobile, auto components; computer software and hardware; e-commerce, and manufacturing of light engineering and electrical, the official said. Further, pending FDI proposals received under this decision up to June 15 this year in the Ministry of Electronics and IT; Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT); and Ministry of Heavy Industries are over 40. Most of the foreign investment proposals have come from China and Hong Kong. Besides, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh too have submitted certain applications. In April this year, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) came out with a press note stating that a company or an individual from a country that shares land border with India can invest in any sector here only after getting government approval.

BOOSTING TOURISM

Foreigners may be allowed to visit soon

THE DECISION IS BEING TAKEN IN VIEW OF THE DECLINING NUMBER OF COVID-19 CASES IN THE COUNTRY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: Amid a decline in Covid cases in the country, India may soon reopen its doors for foreign tourists for the first time in one-and-a-half years, officials said. Since March 2020 when a nationwide lockdown was announced, hospitality and aviation sectors were badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. Top Union Home Ministry officials are deliberating with all stakeholders on the expected date and modalities for opening up of the country for foreign tourists. A formal announcement allowing foreign tourists to visit India may come within the next 10 days, an official

from the Home Ministry said. The decision is being taken in view of the declining number of Covid-19 cases in the country. Sunday, 30,773 new cases were reported while active cases had come down to 3.32 lakh. India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage has also crossed 80 crore as Saturday. The free visa to the tourists will be issued till March 31, 2022 or the issuance of five lakh visa, whichever is earlier. The total financial implication for this would be Rs 100 crore. The free visa move is expected to incentivise short-term tourists visiting India, the official said. The cost for a month-long e-tourist visa is country specific but



is around USD 25. A year-long multiple entry e-tourists visa charge is around USD 40. The e-tourist visa has been suspended since March 2020. The Home Ministry officials

said they are still deliberating whether the entry of foreign tourists will be allowed with certain conditions like limiting it to only vaccinated travellers for now and hav-

- First five lakh foreign tourists will be issued visas free of cost
- A formal announcement allowing tourists may come within the next 10 days
- The opening up is also expected to be phase-wise to see the response and implications

ing a negative list of countries where Covid-19 cases remain a concern. The opening up is also expected to be phase-wise to see the response and implications, another official said. Many countries, including some of those in Europe, have already opened up for tourism.

Kings lord over MI

RUTURAJ HOLDS BATTING UNIT TOGETHER BEFORE CSK BOWLERS COME TO THE PARTY

AGENCIES

Dubai, Sept 19: Ruturaj Gaikwad's (88 n o, 58b, 9x4, 4x6) fantastic innings backed up by some steady bowling enabled Chennai Super Kings (CSK) win the opening game of the second phase of IPL-2021 against Mumbai Indians (MI) at the Dubai Cricket Stadium here Sunday. Batting first after winning the toss, CSK posted 156 for six in their 20 overs and then restricted the defending champions to 136 for eight to win the game by 20 runs.

If Gaikwad shone with the bat, it was the veteran Dwayne Bravo (3/25) who stifled MI with the ball. He was well-supported by pacer Deepak Chahar (2/19) who bowled an incisive opening spell to put MI on the back-foot. He picked up both the MI openers, Quinton de Kock (17) and Anmolpreet Singh (16) to keep the Kings in the game.

Only Saurabh Tiwary (50, 40b, 5x4) offered some resistance with the bat for MI who were without skipper Rohit Sharma. The rest just failed to conjure up a good knock that would have helped team over the finish line.

Rohit was rested for the game due to a knee niggle he had sustained during the recent England tour. MI head coach Mahela Jayawardene said Rohit was kept out of the game as a precautionary measure. "Rohit had something going in last Test (Oval), so we thought a couple of days of extra precaution," he said. Earlier it not been for Gaikwad, it is doubtful whether the Kings would have crossed the three-figure mark. They were rocked early on



IN FULL FLOW: CSK's Ruturaj Gaikwad steps out to play a lofted drive during the IPL-2021 game against Mumbai Indians as wicket-keeper Quinton de Kock watches

PHOTO: @BBCI

Brief scores

CSK 156 for 6 (Ruturaj Gaikwad 88 n o, Adam Milne 2/21, Jaspit Bumrah 2/33, Trent Boult 2/35) beat MI 136 for 8 (Saurabh Tiwary 50 n o, Dwayne Bravo 3/25, Deepak Chahar 2/19) by 20 runs.

some quick runs, to take CSK past the 150-run mark. It was something which had distinctly looked impossible in the 15th over when the

score read 87 for four. In the next five overs, the Kings put on 69 runs with Gaikwad and Bravo putting the opposition bowlers to the sword.

Gaikwad played shots all round the wicket. He used the sweep and cut to good effect to tackle the Mumbai spinners. He took 41 deliveries to reach 50 and his next 38 runs came in just 17 deliveries with a strike rate of over 200. It proved the versatility that he has as a batsman.

KOHLI GIVES UP RCB'S HOT SEAT

BATSMAN SAYS HE WILL CONTINUE AS A PLAYER FOR THE TEAM

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 19: After announcing his decision to quit captaincy of the T20 national side, Virat Kohli said Sunday that this is the last edition of the IPL in which he will be leading Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB). RCB tweeted a video of Kohli on the issue. "This will be my last IPL as captain of RCB. I will continue to be a RCB player till I play my last IPL game. I thank all the RCB fans for believing me and supporting me," Kohli said in the video.

"I have had discussions with the team management on this issue today (Sunday) evening. We had been talking on this issue for the last few days. I had also been contemplating such a decision for the last few days. It has been a great and an inspiring journey, captaining a talented bunch of players in the RCB squad. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the RCB management, coaches, support staff, players, and the entire RCB family, who have been instrumental in

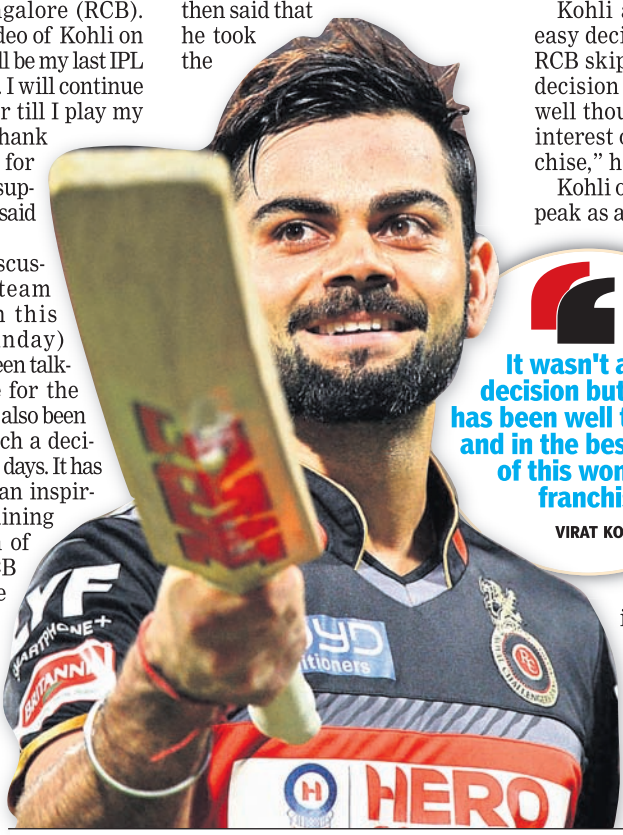
the growth of the franchise over the years," Kohli added.

It should be stated here that Kohli, only a few days back, had said that the T20 World Cup will be his last assignment as captain of the national side in the shortest format of the game. He had then said that he took the

decision to quit captaincy in the T20 format to keep him fresh and mentally fit. He had also said that he would like to concentrate on his batting and that is one of main the reasons why he decided to quit captaincy in the shortest format of the game.

Kohli also said, it wasn't an easy decision for him to quit as RCB skipper. "It wasn't an easy decision but one that has been well thought of and in the best interest of this wonderful franchise," he said.

Kohli of late hasn't been at his peak as a batsman in Tests, a format which he adores. For close to two years now, Kohli hasn't scored a century in the longest format century and has scored 563 runs at 26.80 in 12 Tests during this period. While announcing his decision to quit national T20 captaincy, he had stated that he was taking the step to manage his workload better and improve his batting.



It wasn't an easy decision but one that has been well thought of and in the best interest of this wonderful franchise

VIRAT KOHLI

SHORT TAKES

Paddlers shine

New Delhi: Doubles pairs of Siddhesh Pande and Mudrit Dani, and Fidel R Snehit and Sudhanshu Grover shone for India and finished with bronze medals at the 2021 ITTF Kazakhstan International Open in Karaganda. All the four table tennis players displayed good form during the tournament, before losing in the semifinals. Maharashtra duo Mudrit and Siddhesh suffered a 0-3 loss against the Saudi Arabian pair of Ali Alkhadrawi and Abdulaziz Bu Shulaybi while the combo of Snehit and Sudhanshu went down fighting 2-3 against the Kazakh pair of Alan Kurmangaliyev and Kirill Gerassimenko.

Superb finish

Bordeaux (France): India's Tvesa Malik registered yet another superb result as she finished tied 12 with a final round of 1-under 70 at the 2021 Lacoste Ladies Open de France golf tournament here. She finished with rounds of 69-70-70 for 4-under 208 as Celine Boutier emerged champion after securing victory in the most dramatic of fashions at Golf Club du Medoc. Tvesa has been knocking on the doors of a maiden triumph and finished runner-up at Gant Ladies Open in July.

Greaves dead

London: Jimmy Greaves, one of England's greatest goal-scorers who was prolific for Tottenham Hotspur, Chelsea and AC Milan has died. He was 81. Greaves scored 266 goals in 379 appearances for the Spurs who announced his death Sunday. "Through-out his wonderful playing career, Jimmy's strike rate was phenomenal," Spurs said on the club's website. He also scored 44 goals in his 57 England appearances. Greaves was also in the England side that won the 1966 World Cup. However, he was ruled out of the event after the first game when he suffered an injury.

Pele recovering

Rio de Janeiro: Three-time FIFA World Cup winner Pele said Saturday that his recovery is going well after the 80-year-old was briefly transferred back to an intensive care unit (ICU) Friday after suffering breathing difficulties. He was visited by his daughter Kely Nascimento in the hospital Saturday. The football legend took to social media Saturday to thank his fans.

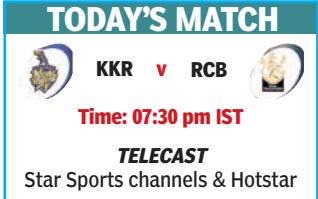
AGENCIES

KKR BANKING ON OPENERS GILL, RANA DESPITE POOR SHOW IN THE FIRST PHASE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Sept 19: Two-time champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) had a forgettable outing in the first phase of IPL-2021. They managed only two wins in the seven games they played before the event was suspended due to the outbreak of Covid-19. They would certainly be hoping for a reversal of fortunes when they take on Virat Kohli's Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in their first match of the second phase here Monday.

KKR chief mentor David Hussey



exuded optimism about scripting a turnaround, despite a night-marish first half. "All we have to do is win this... We have done it before and so we can do it again... I feel we have the squad to do it. You qualify for the finals and whole competition starts again," the Australian said in a virtual press conference Sunday.

Hussey also pinned his hopes on the opening pair of Subhman Gill



A lot will depend on KKR openers Nitish Rana (left) and Subhman Gill

and Nitin Rana to deliver. The two however, had a poor first phase. Gill scored just 132 runs while Rana managed 201 runs in the first seven games for KKR.

However, Hussey praised the duo, calling them the 'next generation of Indian players'. "They both are quality players, they are determined to do very well for the team and for themselves," Hussey

said. "I think they are about to shock the world that they are the next generation of Indian players, not just for one or two series but for perhaps a decade, so if they get going look out for them in the IPL," the Australian added.

However, not just the two, but the likes of skipper Eoin Morgan, Dinesh Karthik and Andre Russell will have to come good with the

bat, if KKR are to make an impression.

RCB, on the other hand, are currently in third position in the points table and would be hoping for Kohli to play freely and score big runs. With Glenn Maxwell (223 runs from seven games) and AB de Villiers (207 runs) leading the run scorers chart till now for the team, RCB's batting unit looks ominous.

Sohini wins doubles title

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: Promising tennis youngster Sohini Mohanty won the girls' doubles title Saturday at the AITA Super Series tournament in Hyderabad. In the final, Sohini and her partner Nainika Reddy of Maharashtra outclassed Sejal Gopal and Venella Reddy 6-1, 6-1. It was a top-notch performance with the winners completely dominating their rivals. Sohini and Nainika did not lose their service games even once. On the other hand they broke the serve of their opponents five times in the match to emerge comprehensive winners. Earlier in the girls' singles competition, Sohini lost in the semifinals.

A student of the Farhan Ali Tennis Academy, Sohini is very hard-working and had won a number of national age group tournaments before Covid-19 hit India. Sohini will be now hoping after her success in Hyderabad that she gets to play as many tournaments as possible.

Odia girls shine

The Indian girls' rugby team finished with the silver medal at the Asia U-18 Girls Rugby Sevens Championship in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. In the final played Sunday, the Indian team lost 17-21



Sohini Mohanty (right) and Nainika Reddy pose with their trophies

to the UAE in a hard-fought encounter. The two-day tournament saw five countries including India participating in the event. The four other countries were Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, UAE and Uzbekistan.

Three players from Odisha stood out with their performances. The three tribal girls are Tarulata Naik, Nirmalya Rout and Mama Naik. All three regularly played for the Indian team in the event.

AGENCIES

London, Sept 19: Cristiano Ronaldo scored his third goal Sunday in his fourth appearance for Manchester United this season as the Red Devils rode on a last minute strike by substitute Jesse Lingard to defeat West Ham 2-1 in their Premier League encounter Sunday. It was a good three points to win for Manchester United on the back of their embarrassing loss in the Champions League earlier this week.

Lingard who has had nothing much to show for in the present season came good after coming off the bench with 20-odd minutes to go. It was a brilliant individual effort with the player cutting in from the left and hitting the target with a right-footed shot.

However, West Ham had the chance to restore parity when they earned a penalty in added on time. However, David de Gea kept out the tame effort by Mark Noble and with it disappeared the aspirations of West Ham.

The Hammers had taken the lead much against the run of play when Said Benrahma scored in the 30th minute. However, luck played a part in the goal.



Cristiano Ronaldo scores against West Ham during the Premier League encounter played Sunday

Benrahma's shot took a wicked deflection off Paul Pogba, leaving Man U custodian David de Gea looking on helplessly as the ball flew into the net.

However, the lead was short-lived as Ronaldo brought things back on an even keel within four minutes. He received a ball from Mason Greenwood and took a prompt shot which parried away by Fabianski. However, the opportunistic player that he is, Ronaldo followed in and volleyed the ball home.

CALLING OFF PAKISTAN TOUR AFTER TERROR THREATS

NZC chief backs decision to quit

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Auckland, Sept 19: New Zealand do not regret the decision to tour Pakistan but the cricket team couldn't have stayed in that country after receiving a 'specific and credible' threat against it, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) chief executive David White said Sunday.

The 34-member New Zealand cricket squad reached Dubai after leaving Islamabad on a charter flight Saturday night. The members of the contingent are undergoing their 24-hour period of self-isolation and 24 of them will return to New Zealand over the next week or so.

The rest will remain in the UAE and join the New Zealand T20 squad, ahead of the World Cup beginning October 17.

"We appreciate this has been a terribly difficult time for the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and wish to pass on our sincere thanks to chief executive Wasim Khan and his team for their professionalism and care," White said in a statement.

"What I can say is that we were advised this was a specific and credible threat against the team. We had several conversations with New Zealand government officials

Cairns preparing for 'biggest' fight

Canberra: Former New Zealand all-rounder Chris Cairns said Sunday the spinal stroke he suffered following a life-saving heart surgery last month will provide him 'with possibly the greatest challenge I've ever faced in rehab going forward'. The 51-year-old former cricketer had collapsed last month after suffering a massive heart attack, resulting in an aortic dissection. "I had several surgeries and grafts, and very thankfully, the specialists were able to save the heart itself," Cairns said in a video message. "One of the complications that arose was a spinal stroke, which in itself will provide me with possibly the greatest challenge I've ever faced in rehab going forward," he added.

before making the decision. We understand a telephone discussion was conducted between the respective Prime Ministers. Unfortunately, given the advice we received, there was no way we could stay in Pakistan," White added.

New Zealand had arrived September 11 in Pakistan for a white-ball series after 18 years.

Gokulam seal last eight spot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 19: Defending champions Gokulam Kerala FC and Army Red entered the quarterfinals of the 130th Durand Cup football tournament from Group D here Sunday, beating Assam Rifles 7-2 and Hyderabad FC 2-1 respectively. The Army Red team became the second Services side after Army Green to progress to the tournament's knockout stages.

Gokulam completely dominated proceedings against Assam Rifles. The Malabarians showed no mercy and raced to an emphatic 4-1 lead by half time. Nigerian striker Chisom Elvis Chikatarra (3), Beneston Plecton Barretto (2), Rahim Osumanu and substitute Sourav scored for the Kerala side. The goals for Assam Rifles were scored by Soibam Roger Singh (36th) and Samujal Rabha (63rd).

The game between the Army side and Hyderabad was a close affair with both sides not ready to give an inch. Liton Shil of Army Red scored a brace and was the star of the match. Koustav Dutta scored the only goal for Hyderabad FC.