



EVIL EYE FOR OTT PLATFORM

Actor Priyanka Copra's *Evil Eye* as part of the series *Welcome to The Blumhouse* will be released on OTT platform

LEISURE

P2



MAHA POLITICS

Shiv Sena downplays storm created by NCP chief Sharad Pawar's public reprimand of his grand-nephew Parth

TWO STATES

P7



ROW OVER RUSSIAN VAX

A majority of Russian docs are wary of the rapidly approved Covid-19 vaccine, a study shows

INTERNATIONAL

P10

NOTICE
There will be no edition of the paper August 16 (Sunday) as the office and press of **Orissa POST** will remain closed Saturday on the occasion of Independence Day.

Wishing readers
HAPPY INDEPENDENCY DAY
EDITOR

SHORT TAKES

■ Odia added to MS Translator

Bhubaneswar: Odia text translation has been added to Microsoft Translator, the company said in a statement. "Odia is available now or will be available soon in the Microsoft Translator app, Office, Translator for Bing, and through the Azure Cognitive Services Translator for businesses and developers," it said. Odia was recently added to the translation service of Google.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



On this day, we became free to make our own rules and also not to follow them

■ Gehlot-led govt wins trust vote

Jaipur: The Ashok Gehlot government in Rajasthan won the motion of confidence by voice vote during the special Assembly session convened Friday. As soon as the special session got underway at 1 p.m., Rajasthan Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shanti Dhariwal moved a motion of confidence, which was accepted by Speaker CP Joshi. **P8**

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIAION
SENSEX	37877.34 ↓ 433.15
NIFTY	11178.40 ↓ 122.10
DOLLAR	75.02 ↑ ₹0.10
EURO	88.58 ↓ ₹0.15
GOLD	₹52,535 ↓ ₹395
SILVER	₹69,295 ↓ ₹1782

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	30.1°C	30.6°C
TEMP MIN	25.0°C	24.0°C
Humidity	99%	95%
Rainfall	13mm	11mm

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky

Reforms to revive real estate in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 14: In a bid to revive the real estate sector and make housing schemes affordable in urban areas in the post-pandemic period, the state government has introduced major reforms in building plan rules in development authority areas.

Housing and Urban Development Minister Pratap Jena Friday said the state government has already notified the Odisha Development Authority (Planning & Building Standard) Rules, 2020, which aimed at bringing uniformity of norms and procedures.

The new rules will also do away with the majority of the provisions of multiple regulations notified by different development authorities. This will help to introduce a common online platform for building plan approval across the state, he said.

"The new rules are both proactive and progressive," Jena said, adding, "they (rules) will address the concerns of all the segments of urban population."

There are many exemptions, relaxations and incentives, which will not only make the small private buildings easy to plan, construct and occupy, but



- 2% reservation of land for EWS & LIG made mandatory
- Relaxation in setbacks, road width, parking requirement
- Up to 8 residential units in one block not to be treated as apartment
- FAR restrictions removed for low risk buildings
- Permission limit of FAR enhanced to 7, which is highest in the country
- Part occupancy certificate will be given for apartments
- No building exceeding 10 metres in height will be permitted within 200 metres of Raj Bhawan, CM House, Secretariat and the Assembly
- Rainwater harvesting mandatory for plots more than 115 sq metres

also encourage construction of large scale high-rise projects and make the housing units more affordable, the minister said.

The setbacks have been relaxed for

almost all the categories of buildings. The restriction of maximum FAR (floor area ratio) on low risk buildings has been removed.

"As many as 108 pre-approved designs for low-risk buildings have been made readily available, which will not only reduce dependency of people on the architects, technical persons and the planning authorities, but the plans will also get approved almost instantly," the minister said.

Construction of houses and obtaining Occupancy Certificates will also be easier than before, he said, adding, that provisions have also been made for development of commercial areas in the residential buildings.

Private developers can now get 60 per cent of the project land on a freehold and free of cost basis for developing affordable housing over 40 per cent of the project area.

"Odisha is the first state in the country to take such a path-breaking and progressive initiative," he said.

While the rate of purchasable FAR has been reduced to half, a lot of relaxations have been given for flexibility in design and relaxations in open spaces have also been provided. Part oc-

cupancy has also been allowed.

Replying to a question, the minister said structural stability and fire safety norms have been made non-negotiable. He said the government is conscious of the environmental impact, therefore the ground coverage restrictions have been introduced along with various measures for enhancing green cover and open spaces.

Provisions relating to enforcement have also been made more stringent and third party inspection has also been introduced along with various penal measures, he said.

In Bhubaneswar Development Authority area, no building exceeding 10 meters height will be permitted without clearance from Commissioner of Police within 200-meter radius from the boundary of the Governor's House, State Secretariat, Legislative Assembly and Residence of the Chief Minister.

Provision of rain water harvesting has been made mandatory for all sizes of plots, which are more than 115 square meters in area including open spaces while recharging of ground water is mandatory for all types of buildings having a plot area more than 300 square meters.

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RBI to transfer ₹57,128cr as dividend to Centre

The government had budgeted ₹60,000 crore as dividend to bridge its fiscal deficit



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 14: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will be transferring ₹57,128 crore of its surplus to the Union government for the fiscal 2019-20, against ₹1.76 trillion of transfer it did last year, the central bank said in a statement.

The government had budgeted ₹60,000 crore as dividend to bridge its fiscal deficit, but government officials had expected more from the RBI. Economists, however, had expected the dividend transfer to be relatively muted this year and the transfer is largely in line with the expectations.

However, as per the economic capital framework (ECF) adopted by the RBI board last year, the contingency risk buffer, or realised equity, has to be maintained at 5.5-6.5 per cent of the balance sheet. The RBI board decided to maintain the Buffer at 5.5 per cent.

In financial year 2018-19, ₹1,23,414 crore of its sur-

plus to the central government for the fiscal year 2018-19 (July to June), and an additional ₹52,637 crore of excess provisions as recommended by the Bimal Jalan committee on ECE. The surplus is commonly called 'dividend'. In 2018-19, the RBI had transferred ₹65,896 crore, in 2017-18 ₹50,000 crore, while in 2016-17, the dividend transfer was just ₹30,659 crore because of demonetisation.

The central bank's financial year runs from July to June, but from next year, the financial year will get aligned with that of the government and will end in March.

The central bank's board met Friday to review RBI's balance sheet, the surplus transfer is part of that review process. "The board reviewed the current economic situation, continued global and domestic challenges and the monetary, regulatory and other measures taken by RBI to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic," the RBI said in its statement.

Prashant Bhushan guilty of contempt

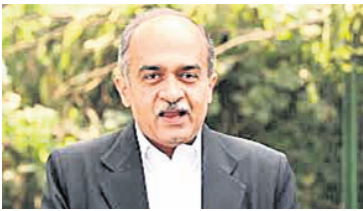
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 14: The Supreme Court Friday held activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his two derogatory tweets against the judiciary saying they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made in the public interest.

Holding that Bhushan attempted to scandalise the entire institution of the Supreme Court, the top court said: "If such an attack is not dealt with, with requisite degree of firmness, it may affect the national honour and prestige in the comity of nations".

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra, BR Gavai and Krishna Murari said: "The tweets which are based on the distorted facts, in our considered view, amount to committing criminal contempt."

"In the result, we hold alleged contemnor No.1 - Mr. Prashant Bhushan guilty of having committed criminal



contempt of this Court". In its 108-page order, the top court discharged the notice issued to Twitter Inc, California, USA in the contempt case after accepting its explanation that it is only an intermediary and does not have any control on what the users post on the platform. The bench said the company has also shown its bona fides immediately after the cognizance was taken by this Court as it has suspended both the tweets.

"We, therefore, discharge the notice issued to the alleged contemnor No.2 (Twitter Inc)," the bench said.

The top court said it would hear August 20, the arguments on the quantum of

I-DAY DRY RUN



Police personnel participate in the full dress rehearsals for the 74th Independence Day celebrations, amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, at Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation Stadium, in Vijayawada, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Parts of Berhampur may develop herd immunity: Experts

SERO PREVALENCE IN SEVERAL REGIONS OF THE CITY WAS FOUND TO BE HIGHER THAN IN DELHI

MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 14: Institutions involved in the sero survey of Berhampur as well as coronavirus experts in the state claim that some pockets of the Berhampur, capital of Ganjam district, might have develop herd immunity against COVID-19 in the last few months.

Their claims are based on reports that the sero prevalence in some areas of the city is about 60 per cent with majority of the people not showing any symptoms of being infected. Experts claim that this may provide the residents of the region a natural protection against the pandemic.

"It is likely that the residents in the areas where sero prevalence is up to 60% have possibly developed herd immunity which can prove to be a natural vaccine against the virus. This was the first phase of our survey. We hope to get a clearer picture in the next survey report," Dr Sanghamitra Pati, Director, Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), told **Orissa POST**.

She, however, denied the possibility of community transmission in the areas, citing the return of lakhs of migrants to the district dur-

ing the pandemic.

Former director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar, Dr Ashok Mohapatra accepted that sero prevalence of 50 per cent to 60 per cent with no symptoms hint towards herd immunity and claimed that unless the sample size is large enough as well as uniform, it would be scientifically incorrect to say that there is herd immunity.

"To arrive at a scientific conclusion, we need a large sample for testing and the testing should be uniform and taken from different parts of the region. Herd immunity comes with the exposure to the virus over a long period - about four to six months," Dr Mohapatra said.

Mohapatra further said that herd immunity does not occur unless the pandemic is four to six months old. Others claim that there are other reasons involved in herd immunity. "Up to 60% sero prevalence hints that the region is headed towards herd immunity. In this situation, some would be infected, while others will get immunity. However, this also depends on RO which is an indication of the virus' rate of reproduction. An RO below one hints at low transmission," said Dr Manoj Sahu, who is associated with WHO for Hepatitis Eradication and Coronavirus Prevention.

In this Maharashtra village, children speak Japanese

FASCINATION FOR ROBOTICS AND TECHNOLOGY HAS PUSHED STUDENTS OF A SCHOOL IN AURANGABAD TO LEARN JAPANESE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aurangabad, August 14: A fascination for robotics and technology has pushed students of a Zilla Parishad-run school in a remote village of Maharashtra's Aurangabad district to learn Japanese.

Gadiwat village, located 25km from Aurangabad city, may not have access to good roads and other necessary infrastructure, but Internet connectivity has proven to be a boon for children studying at the local Zilla Parishad School.

In September last year, the government-run school decided to

launch a foreign language programme, under which students from Classes 4 to 8 were asked to choose a language they would like to learn.

"Surprisingly, most of them said they were interested in robotics and technology and were keen to learn Japanese," Dadasaheb Navpute, a secondary teacher at the school, told this news agency.

Despite having no proper course material and professional guidance for teaching Japanese, the school administration managed to gather information from videos and translation applications on the Internet, he said.



However, the school has now roped in Sunil Jogdeo, an Aurangabad-based language expert, who has been conducting Japanese classes for free. On learning about the initiative, Jogdeo approached the school with a plan to conduct hour-long evening classes virtually.

"I have conducted 20 to 22 sessions since July. Children are dedicated and eager to learn. It is amazing how much they have picked up in this short span," Jogdeo said.

Since every student does not have access to a smartphone for the online classes, the school has come up with the concept of 'vishay mitra' (subject friend), under which children who attend the sessions can teach their classmates.

"Ever since the online classes with Jogdeo started in July, children have been speaking with each other in Japanese" school headmaster Padmakar Huljute said with delight.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES You are creative, and today you will prove to be resourceful and thereby successful! Okay, you are ambitious, says Ganesha, but don't bite off more than you can chew. Be confident of your abilities, work hard and have faith in providence.

TAURUS You will feel the burden of financial responsibilities on your shoulders today, says Ganesha. Do not let expenses bother you. Money will come to you from unexpected sources later in the day. If you can maintain an impartial judgement, then you will yield wonderful results on the financial front, advises Ganesha.

GEMINI Today, you are likely to get encouragement and support for your endeavours from all quarters. You have a gift of gab and your ability to dispel tension with even the simplest of your remarks will be put to test. Still, you will rise to the occasion and prove your mettle.

CANCER If you are a stockbroker, you may feel that things are not going too well for you. Today, you may regret being a stockbroker. Manufacturers must delay the launch of a new product. However, after a waiting game, you may go on to launch the product with a fanfare.

LEO Everyone wants to be different. But little do they realise that they already are unique, says Ganesha. Today, you may meet a lot of such different people at work, some of whom may even test your patience. Always remember that working in a team means balancing a variety of egos and opinions.

VIRGO Take time off all by yourself and introspect today, says Ganesha. Office cubicle looks set to be a war front and pay due attention there, lest things turn to be more difficult, advises Ganesha. New love may just blossom today, and you may even enjoy a nice quiet evening with friends.

LIBRA Some days you get the carrot, while on others, it is the stick! Today is going to be one of those 'stick' days when it comes to dealing with your seniors, foresees Ganesha. It would be wise to delay auction bids or sealed tenders.

SCORPIO You shall be completely immersed in your routine today. It's the same old humbug of a day for you, says Ganesha. But this exhausting day may transform into an exciting evening - so be prepared to get surprised.

SAGITTARIUS Cupid is hunting and you are the game today. Cupid's arrows will have you adrift on the ocean of love and turbulent emotions. Your rescue is imminent, when a member of the opposite sex answers your SOS calls. But use your discretion as to which boat you hitch a ride back home, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN Work will suck you dry of your energy today, says Ganesha. Business rivals will go out of their way to mar your reputation and project you as incompetent. But to their dismay, you will prove to be way too smart to let them succeed in their sinister motives.

AQUARIUS Good news from across the seven seas brings cheer! If you're seeking a visa, you may get one today. Everything looks positive and it reflects in your mood. Share your happiness with your family, says Ganesha, and you will find it multiplies manifold.

PISCES Conflicts galore will come your way at the workplace today. Keep a calm head over your shoulders and do keep tabs on your tongue. Differences only crop up if there are substantial thought processes involved, and keeping this in mind ought to give you the perspective needed to get ahead, says Ganesha.



SANJAY DUTT TO WRAP UP SADAK 2 DUBBING BEFORE MEDICAL BREAK

Before taking a break for medical treatment, actor Sanjay Dutt plans to wrap up the dubbing work of his upcoming film, Sadak 2. "Sanjay will complete the last leg of dubbing for his film Sadak 2 by next week, before going on a medical break," said a source close to the actor.

SAI DHARAM TEJ TO STAR IN A MYSTICAL THRILLER

Southern star Sai Dharam Tej will be seen in a mystical thriller film directed by debutant Karthik Varma Dandu. The untitled project is his 15th film. Sai Dharam Tej made the announcement on Instagram and also shared the poster of the upcoming movie.



Priyanka's Evil Eye headed to OTT platform

New Delhi: Actress Priyanka Copra executive-produces Evil Eye, which is one out of eight spinechilling and interlinked films that constitute the upcoming original OTT series, Welcome To The Blumhouse.

The eight films will have a common theme centred on family and love as redemptive or destructive forces.

The first two films — Veena Sud's The Lie and Emmanuel Osei-Kuffour Jr.'s Black Box — will drop October 6. These will be followed by Priyanka's Evil Eye, and Nocturne, written and directed by filmmaker Zu Quirke, October 13.

The rest of the slate will be unveiled in 2021.

Based on playwright Madhuri Shekar's award-winning production, Evil Eye is directed by Elan Dassani and Rajeev Dassani, and stars Sarita Choudhury, Sunita Mani, Omar Maskati, and Bernard White. It shows how a seemingly perfect romance turns into a nightmare when a mother becomes convinced that her daughter's new boyfriend has a dark connection to her own past.

The Lie, written and directed by Sud, stars Mireille Enos, Peter Sarsgaard and Joey King.



Sonu recalls his initial days of struggle in Mumbai

Actor Sonu Sood is being hailed as messiah of migrants lately, due to his efforts in helping them reach home during the pandemic-induced lockdown. However, there was a time when things were not so rosy for him here.

Talking about his days of struggle, Sonu said: "I am an engineer, and after my graduation when I went back to my family, I thought I would start a family business there. But I always wished to come to Mumbai. Initially I thought that my parents would stop me from going to

Mumbai as I am their only son, but my mother asked me to go and achieve my dreams."

"I still remember when I first came to Mumbai, I had ₹5,500 which I had saved. I went to Film City, paid ₹400 to get an entry because I was stopped at the gate. I thought that if I roamed around in Film City, a director or a producer would spot me and cast me in their project, which never happened. It is only because of my parents' blessings that I am here now,"

added the actor, who had started his film career with the 1999 Tamil movie Kallazhagar. Sonu opened up on his film journey while shooting for the Azadi special episode of the show

India's Best Dancer.



Ishaan to star in a war action film

Mumbai: Actor Ishaan Khatter has been roped in to play Brigadier Balram Singh Mehta in an upcoming war film.

Titled Pippa, the film has the celebrated Army tank at the core of its plot and is directed by Airlift maker Raja Krishna Menon.

"I'm exhilarated to be a part of a film of such magnitude and importance. Getting to play the suave and spirited tank commander Captain Balram Mehta is a true privilege. I'm looking forward to the exciting experience of Pippa," Ishaan said, of working in the tank battle film.

Veteran Brigadier Balram Singh Mehta of the 45th Cavalry tank squadron, along with his siblings, fought on the eastern front during the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, and the film recounts his story. It is based on his book, The Burning Chaffees. Pippa is co-written by Ravinder Randhawa, Tanmay Mohan and Raja Krishna Menon. The film is co-produced by Ronnie Screwvala and Siddharth Roy Kapur.

Talking about the film, Menon said: "Pippa is a war film, but it also has an emotional core celebrating the triumph of love and humanity."

Celebs join CBI probe demand in Sushant case

Mumbai: Several Bollywood stars, including Varun Dhawan and Parineeti Chopra have now joined the growing social media campaign demanding a CBI probe into the Sushant Singh Rajput death case.

Varun took to his Instagram Stories and wrote: "#CBIForSSR", with a folded hands emoji.

Parineeti posted: "All that is needed, is the truth. #JusticeforSSR."

Actor Siddhant Chaturvedi also asked for "#CBIInquiryforSushant", and so did actress Mouni Roy.

Actor Gulshan Devaiah tweeted:

"No hashtags, no finger pointing, no conclusions. I really hope & pray, that the matter around the tragic passing of Sushant Singh Rajput comes to a decisive conclusion. How we 'feel' is less important than true, unbiased justice!! Justice for the sake of Justice & nothing else."

Actress Zareen Khan shared her sentiments on Twitter and wrote: "Sushant's family needs to know the truth, his fans & every person who loved him needs to know the truth. #CBIForSSR #CBIforSushant #Warriors4SSR



#JusticeForSushantSinghRajput."

These demands follow a new video posted by Sushant's sister Shweta Singh Kirti on Instagram and Twitter Thursday, demanding CBI investigation into his death.

"We stand together as a nation for CBI Enquiry! Demanding an unbiased investigation is our right and we expect nothing but the truth to come out. #CBIForSSR #Warriors4SSR #justiceforSushanthSinghRajput @PMOIndia @narendramodi @AmitShah," Shweta had said in the video, which she posted



on her verified Instagram account and her unverified Twitter handle.

In another post, she was seen holding a placard that reads: "I am sister of Sushant Singh Rajput and I request for #CBIForSSR."

She had captioned the image as: "It's time we find the truth and get justice. Please help our family and the whole world to know what the truth is and find closure, otherwise we will never be able to live a peaceful life! #CBIForSSR Raise your voice and demand

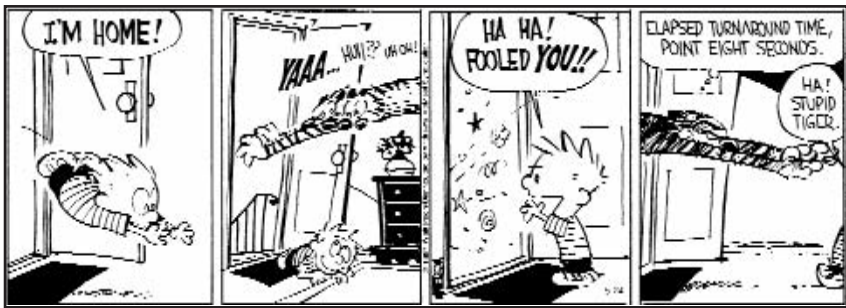
#JusticeForSushantSinghRajput #WarriorsForSSR @sushant-singhrajput."

Following her post, actress Kangana Ranaut also shared a video demanding a CBI probe into the death. Actresses Ankita Lokhande and Kriti Sanon also lent their support to the family. Sushant was found dead in his Bandra apartment in Mumbai June 14. His family has lodged an FIR accusing his girlfriend, actress Rhea Chakraborty, and her family with abetment to suicide among other charges.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

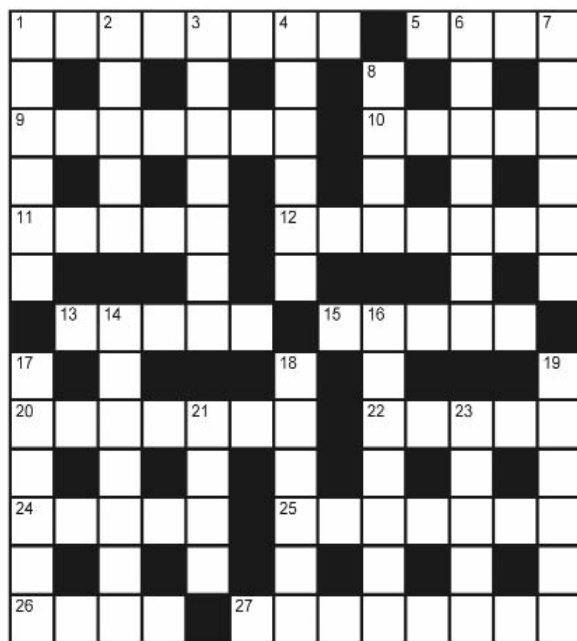


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Shipwreck survivor
- 5 Petty quarrel
- 9 Salad ingredient
- 10 German wine valley
- 11 Dole out
- 12 Set apart
- 13 Sword
- 15 Sicsta
- 20 Nab
- 22 No-frills

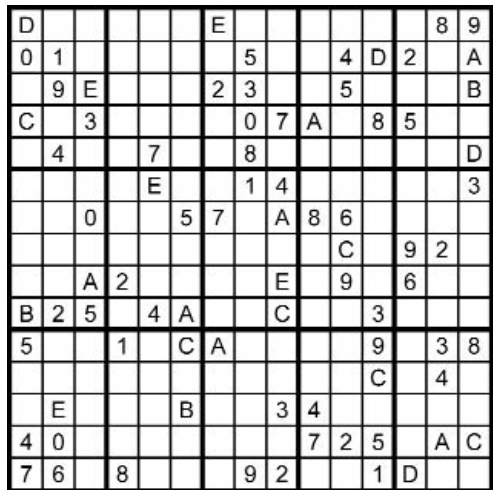
Down

- 1 Neckwear
- 2 Sand bar
- 3 Made to fit
- 4 Beloved of Aphrodite

- 6 Confidential
- 7 Motifs
- 8 Proof word
- 14 Old World plover
- 16 Beirut locale
- 17 Scas
- 18 Soft, dense fabric
- 19 Predicament
- 21 Constellation bear
- 23 Chip dip

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

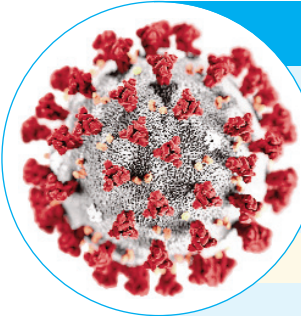


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



I-DAY READY

A member of Vande Mataram Group performs at Gandhi Marg in Bhubaneswar, Friday, on the eve of Independence Day



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,11,61,797	1,39,81,618	7,59,220
India	24,61,542	17,51,846	48,153
Odisha	54,630	39,206	324

State to go for e-tracking of minor minerals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 14: Providing a fillip to implementation of the 5T framework, the state government has decided to develop an online platform for real-time monitoring of minor mineral resources.

While holding a meeting with senior officials, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy instructed the Revenue department to focus on process reengineering of the excavation and transportation of minor minerals in the state through adoption of technology.

He instructed the officials to develop i-4MS (Integrated Minor Mines and Mineral Management System) software for online monitoring of minor minerals. The state government identified 4,693 new minor mineral sources by the end of July.

Odisha tops in PMGSY again

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 14: For the fourth time running, Odisha has been adjudged the best-performing state in implementing the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) as the state constructed 5,300 km roads in 2019-20.

The rankings were announced during a meeting of the State Level Standing Committee headed by Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy held Friday. Additional Chief Secretary of Rural Development PK Jena presented the details of the performance before the panel.

Starting from the financial year 2016-17 to the year 2019-20, the state retained the No 1 position at the national level on execution of PMGSY.

Rural Development director Sudarshan Parida said, "5,300 km of roads were constructed in the state during 2019-20, which is highest at the national level."

It was decided in the meeting that 9,400 kms roads will be constructed in the third



phase of PMGSY during the period of 2020-21 to 2024-25.

During the meeting, the government approved 518 road projects with a total length of 3,500 km in 13 districts. These projects will be constructed under PMGSY Phase-III with an investment to the tune of Rs 2205 crore.

The Chief Secretary directed the Rural Development department to prepare proposals for another 5,900 km road and submit it for approval by September. According to sources, a total of 60,334 km of roads and 574

From 2016-17 to 2019-20, Odisha retained the top position at the national level on execution of PMGSY

A total of 60,334 km of roads and 574 bridges have been constructed in Odisha during Phase-I and II of the scheme

Odisha aims to construct 9,400 km of roads in Phase-III of PMGSY from 2020-21 to 2024-25

bridges have been constructed in the state during Phase-I and II of the PMGSY scheme. In this regard, the Central and state governments have jointly provided Rs 25,682 crore.

Development Commission Suresh Chandra Mohapatra advised to construct roads linking main road to nearby villages and institutions.

Under the PMGSY scheme, the central government provides 60 per cent of the funding and the state government 40 per cent for the construction of roads and poles.

No gym rebate riles fitness enthusiasts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 14: Following a five month hiatus, Prashant Swain, was elated to restart his workout regime as gyms in the city were allowed to open. However, much to his surprise, Prashant was asked to renew his quarterly membership, payment of which he had made only in January.

Gym goers and fitness enthusiasts like Prashant were left baffled by the revised fee structure used by gym owners who are hell bent on not considering a rebate for the closure period. Denizens have complained that they are asked to renew their membership despite not using services during the lockdown.

"Earlier in mid-January, I had shifted from Bangalore. Within a week, I found

a gym to my liking which was also near my residence. Since I'm a professional body builder I had taken the half-yearly plan and paid about Rs. 7,500. However as I re-joined the gym a week ago, I was asked to repay the same or take a monthly plan," complained Prashant.

Moreover, apart from renewal of plans, people complained that gym owners are reluctant to consider the weekend shutdown in their new plans. "Out of 30 days, the gyms are bound to be closed for eight days a month. Yet, we are asked to pay monthly," said Sasmita Mohanty, a gym goer here.

Set at a minimum amount of Rs. 1,000 and maximum of Rs. 12,000, various gyms in the city have lured customers with their fancy equipment and fitness plans.

Our hands are tied. We didn't get any rebate from our monthly rentals and other expenses. We're already suffering from heavy losses. Post unlock, there's a poor turnout of customers. However, we're planning to allow a month's rebate on our quarterly, half yearly and yearly plans if lockdown is imposed for more than a week


ASISH ROUT | BHUBANESWAR HEALTH CLUB MANAGER




However, pointing out to the heavy losses and sluggish business post re-opening, gym owners stated their inability to provide extension.

"Our hands are tied. We did not get any rebates from our heavy monthly rentals and other expenses. We are already suffering from heavy losses and


post unlock there has been no heavy turnout of customers fearing COVID-19. However, we are mulling giving a one-month rebate on our quarterly, half yearly and yearly plans if lockdown is imposed for more than a week," said Asish Rout, Manager of Bhubaneswar Health Club.



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NHRC seeks ATR on Bargarh minor’s rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 14: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked Bargarh District Magistrate to submit an action-taken report (ATR) in connection with payment of compensation to the relatives of a 12-year-old minor girl who was sexually abused by a married man in 2019.



The NHRC issued the direction while hearing a petition filed by rights activist Himanshu Sekhar Nayak, who has sought Rs 15 lakh compensation for the victim and stringent action against the culprit. The issue came to fore after the girl was found five months' pregnant May 26, 2019. Subsequently, her family members lodged a case (129/19) with Barpalli police under POCSO Act. The accused was later arrested. Bargh Superintendent of Police, in a report to the NHRC, asserted that the allegations were found to be true during investigation and medical examination of the victim. The Collector of Baragr had also sent a report to the NHRC mentioning that a team formed by CDMO and DCPU of Bargarh examined the victim and sent her to VIMSAR at Burla for further treatment. After perusal of the reports, NHRC directed the Collector to submit the ATR within six weeks.

Tribal Museum in virtual mode

Bhubaneswar: Now, one can make a virtual tour of Odisha State Tribal Museum as the ST/SC Development department has made it online amidst Covid- 19 pandemic. The virtual tour will enable the audience to visualise exclusive tribal artifacts, habitats and unique aspects of Tribal Museum. One can visit facebook and twitter pages @scstrti, @scstdev to witness the unique aspects. One can virtually visit the museum every Sunday. Virtual tour will continue for 14 weeks, which began August 2, said AB Ota, Director, SCSTRTI.

Police medal for 14 cops from Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 14: As many as 14 personnel of Odisha police have been conferred with President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service and Police Medal for Meritorious Service on the eve of Independence Day, 2020. According to Ministry of Home Affairs, Deputy Superintendent of Police K Benugopal Acharya and Constable Biranchi Narayan Sahoo were awarded with President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service. As many as 12 police officials were felicitated for Meritorious Service. They are: Additional Superintendent of Police Abhiram Kar, Assistant Commandant (SOG) Tapas Ranjan Mohapatra, ACP Anil Mishra, DSP Vigilance Anupama Mohapatra, Additional DCP Bhubaneswar Raj Kishor Paikray,

Inspector under Cuttack UPD Ajaya Kumar Das, Inspector Atul Krishna Das, Inspector Saroj Kumar Patel, Inspector Nirmal Kumar Mohapatra, Subedar Kishore Chandra Balabantaray, OSAP Sepoy Rathalakra and Havildar Mohammad Fazal Umar. The MHA informed that Police Medals for Gallantry (PMG) have been awarded to 215 police personnel for their conspicuous gallant action. President's Police Medals for Distinguished Service have been awarded to 80 police personnel and Police Medal for Meritorious Service to 631 police personnel across the country. Last year, at least 23 police officials from state were awarded Police Medal for Gallantry and 11 officials with Police Medal for Meritorious Service. Two officials were awarded President's Police Medal. Meanwhile, four Odisha

Ghanashyam Upadhyay new IG, Vigilance

Bhubaneswar: The Home department Friday effected a minor reshuffle in Odisha police. 1999-batch senior IPS officer Ghanashyam Upadhyay, who currently holds the post of Inspector General of Police for Economic Offences Wing (EOW), has been given the charge of IGP, Vigilance. Similarly, 2002-batch IPS officer SK Gajbhiye, presently the SP (Computer), will now hold the post of Principal of Urban Police and Traffic Training Institute (UPTTI) in Bhubaneswar. OPS officer Manoj Kumar Mohanta, the additional SP of Kalahandi, has been posted as SP in-charge of Deogarh district. Bijaya Kumar Sahoo, the principal of UPTTI will be the new Commandant for 7th Battalion, Bhubaneswar. Meanwhile, the transfer order of SC Jamadar, the AIG Police Headquarters, has been cancelled.

cops have been selected to receive 'Union Home Minister's medal for Excellence in Police Investigation' award for 2020. Further, nine officials of Odisha Fire services department have also been selected to get various medals including the President's medal for gallantry and distinguished services. Prakash Kumar Bal, leading fireman, has been chosen for the gallantry medal while Surendranath

Gadapala and Manoj Kumar Sahu, both working as station masters, will receive President's medal for distinguished services. Similarly, six other officials including Deputy Fire Officer of Bhubaneswar, Ramesh Chandra Majhi, will be conferred with President's medal for their meritorious services. Further, four home guards including one civil defence volunteer will also receive President's medal.

OTDC braces for ensuring safety of tourists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 14: The Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) has started taking steps to overcome the impact of Covid-19 pandemic which has dealt a body blow to the tourism sector in the state. The OTDC has shared some videos regarding tourism destinations in Odisha and how precautions are being taken for the safety of tourists. The videos also show how proper protocols are being followed to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus and ensure pleasant stay for the tourists, said the OTDC. In the videos shared on OTDC's official social media platforms, the



A still from a video shared by OTDC

OP PHOTO

corporation showcased special packages for the tourists. This apart, special wedding event pack-

age and honeymoon package was also showcased. An official said, "The safety of

In the videos shared on OTDC's official social media platforms, the corporation showcased special packages for the tourists

tourist is our priority and OTDC Panthanivas is following proper protocols to curb the spread of Covid-19 to make your stay pleasant." Earlier, the corporation had issued advisory for OTDC hotels in view of Covid-19. OTDC chairperson Shreemayee Mishra had said the OTDC has taken some major steps to contain the pandemic. She

said that for hotels the managers shall ensure the premises of their respective units are clean and hygienic. They should ensure and promote regular and thorough hand washing by the employees and customers, she added. The managers should also ensure that face masks and tissue papers are adequately available at their units for those who have a runny nose and cough. Meanwhile, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Odisha (HRAO) has sought help from the government. HRAO chairman J K Mohnaty said hotels in the state are incurring huge losses as almost all bookings by inbound tourists, marriage functions and conferences have been cancelled.

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Efforts renewed to end logjam over Lower Suktel

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, August 14: Construction work of the ambitious Lower Suktel Irrigation Project in Bolangir has remained stalled over last two years.

Locals united under the Bolangir Action Committee (BAC) have warned of an agitation over the stalemate if the work is not started within a month.

Meanwhile, a six-member delegation led by MLA Narasigh Mishra has submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister through Collector Arindam Dakua.

MLA Narasingh Mishra, president of the BAC Gopalaji Mishra, president of the Nagarika Committee Bikramananda Bohidar, president of the district Bar Association Pramod Kumar Tripathy, lawyer Bhawani Shankar Satpathy and Ratan Kumar Moharana held discussions with the Collector over the status of the project and the bottlenecks hampering the work.

During the discussions, the delegation demanded that the administration should appoint a regular land acquisition officer and other staff.

The delegation members also made it clear that the work of an important irrigation project like Lower Suktel should not be stopped while there is a need to pay compensations to the displaced and project affected people.

“For a long time, RPDAC meeting has not been held. As a result, problems of the displaced are not taken up for discussion. The displaced people should get what they deserve and the RPDAC meet-



- Locals united under the Bolangir Action Committee (BAC) have warned of an agitation over the stalemate if the work is not started within a month
- Meanwhile, a six-member delegation led by MLA Narasigh Mishra has submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister through Collector Arindam Dakua

ing should be called immediately,” said MLA Narasingh Mishra.

Mishra also said that he would hold talks with the Speaker, the minister of the water resources department and the secretary so as to ensure work within a month. The members of the delegation warned that people of Bolangir would definitely protest if the project work is not started within a month.

The BAC is spearheading the movement in support of the dam project. Members of the BAC had visited Paradhiapali and conducted a meeting with the villagers who were up in arms against the project.

The construction work of the project was stopped due to stiff opposition from villagers around seven months back.

Paradhiapali village is the epicentre of the agitation against the project. Its residents are seeking a one-time compensation as per the Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation Act, 2013. They also demanded that their family members who have now achieved 18 years of age be

included for compensation.

Worried over stoppage of project work, the BAC had earlier urged the district administration to end the impasse with the agitating villagers.

BAC leader Gopalji Panigrahi urged the villagers of Paradhiapali to cooperate with the administration in carrying out the project work.

The members also discussed the problems arising out of the project, compensation and rehabilitation issues with the villagers. It may be noted here that the government has already spent over Rs1,000 crore for the project. At the meeting, the villagers raised their concerns over the proposed dam and pressed for their old demands.

Once commissioned, the project will irrigate 29,146 hectares in Bolangir district and 2,684 hectares in Sonapur, covering 189 villages. Due to frequent conflicts between pro and anti-dam activists, the work on the project has been disrupted several times in the last 12 years.

8-year-old Ganjam girl in India Book of Records

Ishita summed up Ramayan in English during lockdown

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, August 14: Ishita Acharya, an eight-year-old girl from Ganjam district, has found a place in India Books of Records.

Ishita achieved this feat by writing the Ramayana at such a young age. She has set a record for being the youngest author to write the Hindu epic.

Ishita, who is presently staying in Chennai at the work place of her farther, has written a summary of the world famous epic in English language in 57 pages. Ishita took 22 days to complete her writing. Ishita is a Class-III student studying at NSN Memorial School.

Expressing happiness over their daughter's achievement, Ishita's parents said right from her childhood she was inclined towards religious scriptures. “After watching the retelecast of Ramanand Sagar's iconic TV serial Ramayana during the COVID-19 lockdown, Ishita had expressed her willingness to start a summary of Ramayana in English language”, added her parents.

Ishita's father Sanjit Achary said, “She started writing the book in May and finished it within 22 days.” After Ishita completed writing the book, her parents informed the India Books of Records officials regarding her creation. They also sent a picture of the book



and other necessary documents.

Then after verifying all the documents, India Books of Records placed Ishita's feat on the book. Ishita was given a certificate, a gold medal and the book featuring her name.

After achieving the award Ishita said, “I am very happy by finding my name in India Books of Records. My parents supported me a lot to complete my book.”

Now she dreams to find a place in the Limca Book of Records and Guinness World Records in future writing books on extraordinary topics, she said.

“We are proud of our daughter. Since childhood she was attracted towards mythological stories. Her grand-mothers used to narrate one mythological story to her every day. She is often curious to know and that is what helped her to achieve this feat,” said Ishita's parents Sanjit and Rashmita Acharya.

Posthumous ‘Suraj Samman 2020’ to Ganjam organ donor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, August 14: On the occasion of ‘World Organ Donation Day’, donor P Priyankarani Patra of Digapahandi town in Ganjam was posthumously given Suraj Samman 2020 Thursday afternoon. The function was held at the Collectorate.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik awarded the prestigious honour to Priyankarani's kin through video conferencing. Also as part of the award, her kin were handed an amount of Rs 5,00,000.

The award was handed over to her husband V Sameer Kumar Raju by Odisha Assembly Speaker Surya Narayan Patro. “Humanitarian values are still alive these days, in human beings, the chief minister said in his video message.

5T Secretary VK Pandian, Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange and ADM Amiya Kumar Sahoo were at the ceremony.

Priyankarani was injured in an accident January 26 and succumbed later. Her kin wanted to donate her organs. Her kidneys were transplanted into the body of two critical patients at Apollo Hospital, Bhubaneswar and SCB Medical College and Hospital.



For more details, visit homeloans.sbi

STATE BANK OF INDIA, BHUBANESWAR CIRCLE

Koraput to have mega drinking water project

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, August 14: Even as many pockets in Koraput are deprived of safe drinking water, an ultra mega drinking water project will be set up at Boipariguda area. This was informed by MLA Raghuram Podal here Thursday.

Addressing a presser here, Podal said over 1.05 lakh people in 225 villages of 14 panchayats will benefit from this mega drinking water project.

Another such drinking water project will be set up in Malkangiri to provide drinking water to 56,200 people in 10 panchayats. He added that an estimated ₹258.67 crore would be spent for the two drinking water projects.

57 healthy babies born from Covid-19 positive moms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, August 14: Even though Ganjam has emerged as a hotspot for COVID-19 infections in Odisha, one would be surprised to know that amid the ongoing crisis, 57 healthy babies have taken birth from mothers who had tested positive for COVID-19 during their pregnancy.

Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange twitted about it Thursday. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik also expressed his happiness over the incident in his twitter account Friday Out of the 57 babies, 16 are girls and the rest are boys.

All these babies have no Covid symptoms despite being born from Covid positive mothers, said Kulange.

Their mothers have recovered from the disease. The situation in the southern part of the district is improving gradually.



INDIA CELEBRATES 74th INDEPENDENCE DAY

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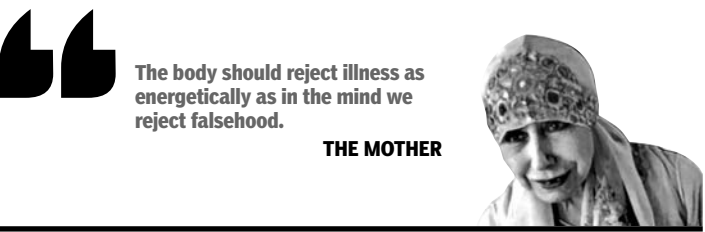
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The body should reject illness as energetically as in the mind we reject falsehood.

THE MOTHER

India at UN

India will take over as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) in January 2021. The government has begun preparations by deciding to upgrade India's diplomatic presence at the UN. The Indian delegation is being strengthened with the appointment of an additional deputy permanent representative and a counsellor to solely handle Security Council matters.

According to sources, the 1999-batch Indian Foreign Service officer R. Ravindran, who is joint secretary (Central and West Africa) will join the Indian Permanent Mission in New York in the rank of additional deputy representative. He served in the office earlier under Hardeep Singh Puri, who is now Minister of Civil Aviation, Urban Development and Commerce, but who headed the mission when India was a non-permanent member in 2011-2012.

Ravindran's colleague Pratik Mathur, who is from the 2007 batch, and is deputy secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), will be a counsellor. Both IFS officers will join the mission before the 75th UN General Assembly opens next month. The India mission is currently headed by T.S. Tirumurthi, with Nagaraj Naidu as deputy permanent representative.

It is also said that External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will be keenly following India's stint at the Security Council with regular monthly reviews.

Retirement practices

At a time when the Covid pandemic has forced states to tighten their finances, the Tamil Nadu government has decided to increase retirement benefits for retired senior officials. Citing petitions from the IAS Officers' Association and senior bureaucrats, it has permitted an additional Rs 10,000 monthly servant allowance to all retired chief secretaries and additional chief secretaries.

The move is bound to raise eyebrows since many other states with strained finances have been forced to hold back DA of government officials and pushed back pension grants. Barely two months ago, the government had increased the retirement age of babus from 58 to 59 years, ostensibly to postpone the huge pension burden it would face. More recently, the government has given retiring chief secretary K Shanmugam a three-month extension.

According to sources, the state government has based the order on a similar move by neighbouring Karnataka in 2015. Then Karnataka had allowed chief secretaries and additional chief secretaries a servant allowance of Rs 6,000 plus telephone and medical allowances over and above the pension and other benefits of the retired babus.

Bitter medicine

Manipur has a qualified doctor as the state's new chief secretary. Senior IAS officer of the Manipur cadre, Rajesh Kumar who was additional chief secretary, has succeeded J. Suresh Babu who superannuated from government service. Incidentally, Babu was also a doctor who became a civil servant.

Kumar's appointment comes in the backdrop of a demand from several student organisations in the state to appoint a "qualified state native" to the post of chief secretary Kumar, who is an IAS officer of the 1988 batch, is not. Once Kumar's appointment was announced, some organisations are now demanding that the decision be reviewed. The state government, however, has shown no sign of acknowledging this demand.

With the students upset over what they term as "denial of rights of the native communities" by the state government, Dr Kumar as the new chief secretary may have to apply a healing balm to the "hurt" sentiments of the student community first, besides getting down to discharging his own considerable administrative duties.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipcherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard, are sweeter. JOHN KEATS

The devil is not so black as he is painted. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

As long as your body is healthy and under control and death is distant, try to save your soul; when death is imminent what can you do? KAUTILYA

WORDSWORTH

Teetotal

It's an odd-looking word. The first part makes no obvious sense, and as a result some people have assumed that it's a misspelling, suggesting that those who abstained from alcohol turned to tea for their refreshment, on which they became totally reliant – hence tea-total. Where it comes from has puzzled people to the extent that other odd stories exist. It has been argued that those who signed the pledge at temperance meetings had their names marked with the letter T to indicate their total abstinence. Lansing, New York, is often quoted here, where it is said to have first happened in January 1827, but there's no contemporary evidence for it – the story only surfaced much later in the century. However, this story is not too far from the truth of the matter. It's accepted that the word, at least in the abstinence sense, was coined by Richard 'Dickie' Turner in a speech he gave to a temperance meeting in Preston, Lancashire, in September 1833. Turner was an illiterate working man, a fish hawk, who had visited one of the early Preston temperance meetings in 1832 as a joke while half-drunk, but who came out of the meeting a convert. He was one of the founding Seven Men of Preston who signed the pledge and became a fervent advocate of that form of temperance that demanded total abstinence from all forms of alcoholic drink, not just spirits as some more moderate reformers urged. There's no formal record of what he said at the meeting – one report had it that his words were "nothing but the tee-total would do" but it is also claimed that he said in his strong local accent, "I'll be reet down out-and-out t-t-total for ever and ever." Here's where it all gets a bit murky. Did Dicky Turner stutter, did he invent a new word by adding t as an intensifier to the front of total, or was he using one already known? We will probably never be entirely sure. What is certain, though, is that his word caught on in the local temperance movement, was often quoted in its journal, the Preston Temperance Advocate, giving the credit to him as inventor, and soon became a standard word in the language. Richard Turner died in 1846 and is buried in St Peter's churchyard in Preston; he may be the only person in the world whose claim to have invented a new word is cited on his tombstone.

LOL

UNUSED HEART

An elderly patient needs a heart transplant and discusses his options with his doctor. The doctor says, 'We have three possible donors. One is a young, healthy athlete. The second is a middle-aged businessman who never drank or smoked, and the

third is an attorney who just died after practising law for 30 years.' 'I'll take the lawyer's heart,' says the patient. 'Why?' asks the doctor. The patient replies, 'It's never been used.'



SPECTRUM RIVERS



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

SINCE THE HOOGLY IS BRINGING LESS SEDIMENTS, THE HUNGER OF THE SEA IS NOT SATISFIED AND THE SEA HAS STARTED TO EAT THE GANGA SAGAR ISLAND

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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FOCUS EDUCATION

CATCHING THEM YOUNG



The NEP, 2020, makes amends for the dichotomy in the 86th Amendment and paves the way for bridging the huge opportunity gap in pre-schooling between the affluent and the underprivileged

wholesome nutritious food with adequate protein intake, vitamins and micro nutrients to children who will be undergoing pre-schooling. The policy has set a target of achieving foundational literacy and numeracy by 2025, where ASER reports find close to 60 per cent and 70 per cent deficits respectively. It has also emphasised that besides foundational and numeracy skills, children have to develop cognitive skills (critical thinking) and soft skills like cultural awareness, as advocated by Joseph Nye.

In order to achieve such a transformative change, the policy advocates for standalone Anganwadis, co-located with primary schools, as also pre-primary schools co-located with primary schools and standalone pre-schools. It also laid emphasis on the importance of improving quality of infrastructure of Anganwadis and of well-trained teachers who can take the mandate of quality informal teaching in a joyful environment to fruition. The policy also looks at serious problems of high dropouts after children cross the age of eight.

As per UNESCO Institute of Statistics, close to 62 crore children were out of school in 2013. It also takes note of open distance learning which needs to be revamped and restructured; and looks at restructuring the curriculum by pooling children in the age group of 3-8 wherein they will have the benefit of foundational learning and activity based works, besides giving importance to team work. The policy takes note of the natural potential of children to learn a number of languages and suggests encouraging multi-lingualism in the age-group of 3-8. But it

does seek to change the three language format. Use of technology has been recognised as a powerful tool to enhance learning, assessment and planning. During the present Covid times, the importance of online teaching has been clearly recognised. The study of open distance learning has brought out a few important deficiencies; firstly that teachers need to be comfortable while using ICT. Also, ease of use has been a major challenge as four students are given one PC, the maximum capacity of ICT lab being of 40 students. Many such centres do not have prescribed time table for ICT; and access and availability are limited. As Jenny Arledge observes, "Technology can become the wings that will allow the educational world to fly faster, if we allow it."

Funding of education has been a serious problem, particularly after its universalisation. Due to poor funding of public schools, poor quality of school infrastructure, and poor accountability of teachers, there has been a significant rise in the number of children gravitating to private schools (30 per cent). The Kothari Commission had suggested that 6 per cent of GDP should be earmarked for education. The new policy notes that most states spend only 10 per cent of their total budget expenditure on education. The overall spending is around 4 per cent of GDP by the Centre and the states. The policy recommends that states should increase their spending to 20 per cent of their annual budget and 6 per cent of GDP, in a decade's time. This is a welcome move. The policy also seems to put a premium on public

education and strongly deplores commercialisation of education.

A mention may be made of the Birla-Ambani Report of 1999, where they had strongly pitched for total commercialisation and corporatisation of education. The present policy does not fall for such a market/business driven approach to education and considers early schooling and primary education as a merit. Economist Richard Musgrave had strongly suggested that quality early childhood education should be the predominant remit of governments. The spin-off of such expenditure on quality primary education will have a cascading effect later on in the knowledge economy that we straddle.

The recommendations of the policy are indeed salutary. However, since education is a concurrent subject, it remains to be seen how the state governments rise to the challenges of earmarking more funds for quality education. The experience so far reveals wide variation between states. Kerala, Delhi and Tamil Nadu spend nearly 25 per cent of their budget on education, while it is limited to 10 per cent in most other states. The decrepit infrastructure, poor IT support and indifferent teacher quality are a testimony to the poor educational outcomes. Therefore, a strong regulatory authority would be required to ensure that quality of curriculum and dispensation of teaching conform to the lofty objectives of promoting foundational, cognitive and other skills.

The world is rapidly changing as a knowledge landscape. Rise of big data, machine learning, and artificial intelligence is rendering many unskilled jobs redundant. There is a greater need for high-end skills. However, it has to be supplemented by exposure to liberal arts, character building and encouraging learners to be more ethical, rational, compassionate, caring and secular. The mind of a child is like a clean canvas. The effort should be not to crowd it with rote learning but to provide holistic education where arts, crafts, sports and science coalesce. The proposed paradigm shift in ECCE is most welcome.

SN Misra is a professor of Economics and Sanjaya Kumar Ghadai is a research scholar

Balance between water, sediments

River Hooghly used to get dry in the last century. We made the Farakka Barrage in the seventies to divert the water of the Ganga to the Hooghly to keep her alive. Subsequently, we made an agreement with Bangladesh to share water of the Ganga equally. We are now diverting one-half of the water to Hooghly and one-half is going to Bangladesh through River Padma, by which name the Ganga is known in Bangladesh.

Farakka has been successful in making the Hooghly live again. However, three problems have arisen.

The first problem is that the Sunderbans are getting eroded due to the Farakka. The sediments brought by the Ganga are distributed unequally between Hooghly and Padma. The Farakka Barrage has gates to regulate the flow to Hooghly and Padma. A pond has been formed behind the barrage. The sediments settle in this pond. The water coming out from below the gates of Farakka goes to Bangladesh. This water carries

more sediments. Water from the upper levels of the pond goes to the Hooghly. This water carries less of sediments. The result is that while water is shared equally, more sediments go to Bangladesh and less to Hooghly. Both Bangladesh and India are suffering due to this imbalance.

When more sediments go to Bangladesh, these get deposited on the bed of the Padma, choking the channel, resulting in more of flooding in Bangladesh. A fortuitous result, however, is that a part of these excessive sediments reaching the Bangladesh sea coast meant accretion of the land of Bangladesh. On the other hand, the water going to Hooghly has less sediments. This brings trouble of a different type. The sea has a natural hunger for the sediments just as we have hunger for bread. Since the Hooghly is bringing less sediments, the hunger of the sea is not satisfied and the sea has started to eat the Ganga Sagar Island. In this way, the Farakka Barrage is eating the sacred land of India.

The sea brings in a large amount

of sand with it during the high tide, which is stronger. It is, however, not able to carry this sand back with the low tide, which is weaker. Therefore, the sea has always deposited sediments in the mouths of the Ganga. Indeed, a part of the land of Ganga Sagar being eaten by the sea today is being deposited in the mouths of the Ganga. This natural phenomenon has become adverse because these sediments were previously being pushed back into the sea during the major floods.

This is not happening now because water is less, as a share of the water is being removed at Tehri, Haridwar and Narora. The result is that it is becoming progressively difficult for ships to come to Haldia and Kolkata ports. Often, a dredger moves in front of a ship, clearing the channel for the ship to some in. The purpose of Farakka to assist navigation has been utterly defeated.

The solution to these problems requires a comprehensive study. Some preliminary thoughts can however be shared. Firstly, we need

to find alternative ways of diverting the water to the Hooghly in such a way that the balance between water and sediments is not disturbed. One possibility is to dredge the Bhairavi and Jalangi rivers downstream of Farakka. These rivers join the Hooghly. We divert the water-and-sediment of the Ganga to the Hooghly though these rivers if we do not make a barrage and a pond wherein the sediments settle. The second step to be taken is to make an agreement with Bangladesh to provide 80 per cent water to Bangladesh during one month in the monsoons, and 80 per cent to the Hooghly the next month. This will restore the major floods in the Padma and Hooghly, push the sediments coming from the upstream and the sand coming with the high tide back into the sea. That will clear the channel of the Hooghly and perhaps save the Haldia and Kolkata ports from incapacitation.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore.

Justice to Sushant

Sir, People are puzzled as to whether the nation's law and order systems are of any help to the people. Sixty days have passed, but not a single suspect or accused has been arrested in the Sushant Rajput death case. Reports say witnesses are absconding and the Mumbai police is not being serious about the investigations. The home minister in Maharashtra is claiming the state police is competent enough to handle the case. Others might not agree to such claims. The Maharashtra Police is not willing to hand over the case to the CBI. First of all, the prime accused are to be arrested. Witnesses are to be brought forward to give evidence as to what happened in the fateful night at Sushant's flat.

Naresh Mandal, Prachi Nagar, BHADRAK

Boost e-office system

Sir, The South Western Railway zone sets an example to be an e-office. The digital file movement tripled in the past four months amid the Covid pandemic. SWR's e-files created by users, standing at 3,623, rose to 14,069. During this time, 803 new e-office users were registered. This is a brilliant move towards Digital India. The e-office system minimises human and physical contact at workplace, replacing manual filing systems, saving operational costs, and reducing carbon footprint. The need of the hour is that all departments establish the e-office system. This will help cut red tape.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA

Child labour

Sir, We are making many laws to control child labour. Still, a lot of children are working in garages, hotels, dhabas and grocery shops. The condition and education levels of migrant children are pretty bad. Governments are providing rations, homes and other facilities to the poor to improve their condition. Governments are supporting poor farmers through various schemes. But the situation has not changed. Most of the parents in tribal areas do not take proper care of their children. Girls are suffering more in tribal and backward families. Data shows many children engaged in work have their names in the school register. Due to poor engagement and rough behaviour of teachers, most children in rural areas are leaving schools before completing their education. Most schools are focusing more on MDM rather than teaching.

Santosh Kumar Mohanty, Safa, CUTTACK

SENA DOWNPLAYS PAWAR'S SNUB TO KIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 14: The Shiv Sena Friday sought to downplay the controversy created by NCP president Sharad Pawar's public reprimand of his grand-nephew Parth Pawar for seeking a CBI probe into actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

The political storm generated over the public rebuke by Sharad Pawar of his grand-nephew Parth Pawar was 'not even a storm in the tea cup', the ruling saffron party in Maharashtra and an ally of the NCP said.

The NCP chief had said Wednesday that he attached "absolutely no importance" to Parth Pawar's demand for a CBI probe into the actor's death. The Pawar senior also called Parth Pawar, who is the son of his nephew and deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, "immature".

An editorial in the Shiv Sena



FAMILY POLITICS

A few days ago, Parth Pawar had met state Home Minister Anil Deshmukh and later wrote a letter demanding a CBI probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's death, which probably irked the NCP chief

Sarad Pawar's statement shocked political circles and served to refuel speculation of cracks emerging within the state's leading political clan as Parth is the son of Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar

mouthpiece 'Saamana' hit out at news channels for "blowing the issue out of proportion". There was nothing wrong in what Sharad Pawar did, the Sena publication said.

"These people (news channels) create artificial storm for their livelihood. Pawar's comments on Parth are being construed as sign that

not all is well in the Pawar family.

"Sharad Pawar is a senior leader and head of a political party. He can admonish the young. Even late (Shiv Sena founder) Bal Thackeray has done that," the editorial said.

"When your tongue is not in your control, you face a lot of problems. Ajit Pawar has gone through such

problems. So now he controls himself. His son Parth is new in politics and that is why his statements create controversy. Even some senior and experienced politicians have demanded a CBI probe," the editorial said in a veiled reference to BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis.

"Pawar's comments against his

grand-nephew were just to put a break on his actions. Why so much hue and cry over it?" the Marathi daily asked.

Parth Pawar welcomed the start of the construction of the new Ram temple in Ayodhya and wrote a long public letter about it, the editorial said. "There is nothing wrong in speaking in favour of Ram mandir which is being constructed with the Supreme Court approval. (Congress leaders) Priyanka Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, too, have expressed their views. (Chief Minister and Sena president) Uddhav Thackeray visited Ayodhya. But nobody wrote long letters to express their views like Parth," the editorial said.

The paper advised Parth Pawar to take the senior Pawar's rebuke as a blessing and learn right lessons from "the political gymnasium" that exists in his home.

High altitude potato to get global attention

Polish firm Neilson Europe will procure locally grown Kufri Chandramukhi and Kufri Jyoti varieties of potatoes for its vodka brands



The Lahaul Valley is known for growing prized seed potatoes, whose history goes back to 1854 when missionary AW Hide from Germany established a farm near Keylong, the district headquarters town

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, August 14: Farmers in tiny hamlets dotted over Himalayan peaks of the landlocked Lahaul Valley of Himachal Pradesh are not in high spirits amid the pandemic with government plans to promote contract farming of the highly remunerative barley for making malt whiskey having gone awry, at least this year.

But a Polish company that recently signed a pact with the state is eyeing to compensate growers owing to coronavirus by procuring locally grown high variety, disease-free Kufri Chandramukhi and Kufri Jyoti varieties of potatoes - rated the best in the world for high altitude growing - for its vodka brands.

State agriculture officials said it is not feasible to go for planting barley at this point in time as the summer cultivation season in the valley is almost near completion.

The state November 6, 2019, signed a MoU with Polish spirits producer Neilson Europe to initially involve nearly 200 farmers of Lahaul-Spiti district and some pockets in Kinnaur and Chamba districts to go for contract farming of a high-yield barley variety imported from Scotland and Europe.

"We were hopeful to go for contract farming of barley this season, but the coronavirus scare had delayed it, maybe for a year now. This season we again went for the cultivation of our traditional potato crop," Ishwar Bodh, a farmer of Darcha, told IANS.

The Lahaul Valley is known for growing prized seed potatoes, whose history goes back to 1854 when missionary AW Hide from Germany established a farm near Keylong, the district headquarters town. The seed potatoes are in great demand in states like West Bengal, Bihar and Karnataka. The

other cash crops are peas, cauliflower and hops.

As per the pact, the Polish spirits producer has proposed to invest Rs 110 crore under its project 'Grain to Glass' to produce the organic Himalayan single malt whiskey by involving farmers in contract farming and setting up a world-class distillery. According to the producer of the award winning spirits ZOUK and Extill, world's single estate rye vodkas, the geographic and climatic conditions of Himachal Pradesh are on a par with Scotland's and many other European regions which will lead to deriving a unique and special terroir. A total of 85 kg of barley seed of the Laureate variety per acre will be provided to each 200 farmers on a trial basis by the company. This variety is the most widely grown spring malting barley in Scotland. Surveys by the agriculture department show the area under cash crop potato cultivation in the Lahaul Valley has declined in 10 years from 2,000 hectares to about 700 hectares.

Likewise, there has been a near decline in the cultivation of hops, a key ingredient in brewing beer; as a major cash crop in the valley owing to dumping of cheaper varieties from China, the US and Germany.

Himroo weavers wait for int'l tourists for biz revival

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aurangabad, August 14: Hit hard by the coronavirus-induced lockdown, 'Himroo' weavers in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district are waiting for return of international tourists, prime customers of their products, and full-fledged start of normal activities for revival of their business.

Imran Qureshi, who belongs to a local family of Himroo weavers, is worried man as his business has suffered considerably due to the lockdown and is now pinning his hopes on "Unlocking" process to bring customers. "The turnover of our business prior to lockdown was Rs 10 lakh to Rs 12 lakh a year. This is almost zero now. I had a unit of six handlooms, but I have decided to shut it and bring those looms home. Foreign tourists, who are our prime customers, are not coming to Aurangabad since lockdown. How long it will take for situation to normalise, we don't know," Imran Qureshi told PTI.

"We have a limited number of craftsmen who know this art of weaving. We

didn't reduce manpower in lockdown, but they are not getting the salaries they used to get earlier," said another member of the family Aamer Qureshi.

Imran is worried about the vanishing art of traditional Himroo weaving, which is one of the identities of Aurangabad, a city in central Maharashtra with a rich history and culture and also an international tourist hub. "No marketing, use of powerlooms and lack of government initiative is making this art rare. There are many places in Aurangabad where Himroo-like fabrics are sold which are actually made on powerloom.

"The actual Himroo fabric is hand woven. I tried to continue the work with weavers called from Banaras (Varanasi). But its demand has declined so is the production," said Imran Qureshi, whose family is involved in Himroo weaving for generations.

Stoppage of flights from Rajasthan led to a negative impact on Himroo business in Aurangabad, he said. "Tourists coming by Udaipur flight to Aurangabad used to be Europeans, Americans and



THE FABRIC

Himroo is a fabric made of silk and cotton and its origin in Aurangabad can be traced back to medieval India

The once thriving Himroo weaving industry here is now struggling for survival and efforts are on to obtain Geographical Identification (GI) mark for the art in a push to save it from going into total oblivion

Mexicans. They used to buy Himroo products on a large scale. Now, the scene has changed as Thai, Chinese and Korean tourists visit the city in more number. But they don't buy (these products) much," Imran said.

Another Himroo weaver and businessman Ramesh Khatri said, "My yearly turnover used to touch Rs 1 crore. But the business in two months since Unlock phase is not more than Rs 4 lakh."

Virus scourge in industrial areas takes toll on Himachal's economy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, August 14: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has said the industry has been badly affected due to the Covid-induced lockdown and migration of labourers.

Speaking at the inaugural session of a webinar organised by CII on 'HP Economic Summit-Getting the Growth Back', he said out of 3,636 coronavirus cases in the state, 800 were from industrial areas. Thakur said efforts would be made to expedite the work on four laning of the road passing through industrial areas. For this, steps were being taken to persuade the Union government to en-

sure railway connectivity in Baddi, Barotiwala and Nalagarh industrial area in Solan district would be strengthened. The state offers attractive incen-

tives under the Industrial Investment Policy to boost industrialisation and make it more attractive and industry-friendly, he said.

BHUBANESWAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Progress through Partnership for Better Bhubaneswar
XXII(L) - 39/2019
Notice No. 33409
Date: 12.08.2020
CORRIGENDUM - 1 FOR AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR PACKAGE OF / INDIVIDUAL PARKING LOTS IN BMC AREA
No. C-102: In reference to the Auction Sale Notice for Parking of Individual Parking Lots in BMC area, Tender No. 31959 dated 06.08.2020, all are advised to note that due to current restrictions imposed due to COVID-19, the Pre-bid Meeting, scheduled to be held on 17.08.2020 at 12.00 Noon in BMC Conference Hall, will be conducted through Video Conferencing (VC). Pursuant to this, BMC is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Please find the link below.
<https://zoom.us/j/95844967417?pwd=aGhyVk95YkMdm03a29mSlxUtdtSQTO9>
Meeting ID: 958 4496 7417
Passcode: 4FAnHc
The intending bidders who may not avail the VC access, are advised to mail their written queries by 16.08.2020 on email id bmcpmu@bmc.gov.in.
Sd./- Dy. Commissioner (Revenue)
Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation
OIPR-13002/11/0029/2021

ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government Of Odisha Undertaking)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, L.I. DIVISION, SUNDARGARH
No. CAD-352 E-mail ID: eeolicsngh@gmail.com
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Identification No. EEOLICSNG-02/2020-21 Dt.13.08.202

01	Name of Work	Installation & Energisation of 32 Nos. of New LIPs in different Blocks of Sundargarh dist.
02	Estimated Cost	Rs.32.91 Lakhs to Rs.66.15 Lakhs (approx)
03	Period of Completion	120 Days
04	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 10.00 Hrs. of 24.08.2020 to 17.00 Hrs. of 05.09.2020
05	Date & Time of Opening of Bids	11.00 Hrs. of 07.09.2020
06	Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Sundargarh

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd./- Executive Engineer
L.I. Division, Sundargarh
OIPR-32138/11/0002/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RWS&S DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR-761126
Phone No.06821-241026 (O) / 241079(R)
Fax No.06821-241026/240056, e-mail: eerwss_bnj@ori.nic.in, eerwssbnj2009@gmail.com
No. O-239:-
Govt. of Orissa 'e' Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.E.E. RWS&S 22/2020-21
1. The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bhanjanagar, Ganjam on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Double cover system according to the norm of 'e' Procurement system in online mode for supply, drawing, design, construction, testing and commissioning and maintenance of different PWS Schemes in Ganjam District from the eligible contractors as per DTCN.
2. Nature of work : Rural Piped Water Supply Schemes.
3. No. of tender : 5 Nos.
4. Tender paper cost : Rs.6000/- to 10,000/-
5. Tender cost : Rs.49.35 lakhs to 67.79 lakhs
6. Class of contractor : 'B' Class to 'A' Class
7. Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal : Dt. 25.08.2020 at 11.00 A.M. to 08.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.
8. Date of opening of bid : Dt. 09.09.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
9. Period of completion : 240 (Two hundred forty) days
10. The bidders have to participate in online bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>
Sd./- Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bhanjanagar
OIPR-25021/11/0007/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, CUTTACK
Email ID - rw_cuttack@yahoo.co.in, Ph.No.0671-2440662/FAX No.0671-2440663
No. O-239:-
Lr. No: 10160 Dated : 10.08.2020
'e' PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO.04 OF 2020-21
1. Name of work : Construction of Road work in the District of Cuttack for the year 2020-21
2. Total No. of Work : 03 (Three) Nos.
3. Estimated Cost : Rs.53.28 lakhs to 82.32 lakhs
4. Period of Completion : 06 (Six) Calendar Months.
5. Class of contractors : 'B' & 'A' Class only.
Other details as follows:
a) Procurement Officer : Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Cuttack.
b) Availability of tender : From 24.08.2020 to 07.09.2020 upto online for bidding 17.00 hours.
c) Last date & time of seeking of tender clarification : 05.09.2020 upto 17.00 hours.
d) **Date & time of opening of tender.**
Technical Bid : 08.09.2020 at 11.00 hours
Financial Bid : Will be intimated later.
Further details can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Cuttack
OIPR-25053/11/0007/2021

Packages for tribals, workers hit by lockdown

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, August 14: In a significant move, the Maharashtra cabinet has given its nod to packages for tribal families and construction workers in the state who are hit hard by the lockdown, it was announced Friday. As per the cabinet decision, there will be a package of ₹436 crore for tribals and forest-dwelling communities, under which each family will get a special grant of ₹4,000.

Labour Minister Dilip Walse-Patil has also announced a second instalment of ₹300 crore for nearly 10 lakh construction workers who have been rendered jobless in view of the ongoing lockdown. Under this, all eligible labourers will get ₹3,000 directly into their bank accounts to help them tide over the immediate crisis.

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Interested vendors are invited to bid for the tender. The Last date of submission of the tender is 01.09.2020 upto 3.00 PM.
For AIC-NITF Director

of the day quote

If a cancer patient becomes COVID-19 positive, it is very dangerous. We have asked cancer patients not to come to hospital for treatment because if they contract the virus, it will be very serious

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE MINISTER

The BJP has constructed 500 party offices across the country whereas the construction work on 300 others is in progress

JP NADDA | PRESIDENT OF BJP

Resumption of mining is very important for the development of Goa. The issue is before the court, but the CM is also working to find a political solution for this through legislative means. I am satisfied with the attempts made by the CM

SATYA PAL MALIK | GOA GOVERNOR

SHORT TAKES

Girl raped

New Delhi: A 13-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her neighbour when she went outside to relieve herself in southeast Delhi's Sarita Vihar area, police said Friday. The police have arrested the 18-year-old man. The incident took place Thursday, they said. The girl, a Class IX student at a government school, was taken to a hospital for medical examination, a senior police officer said. The father of the minor told the police that the incident took place when his daughter had gone outside the jhuggi to relieve herself. Her neighbour and one of his friends took her behind the bushes, where the 18-year-old raped her. Later, the accused fled the spot, the officer said.

AIIMS doctor found dead

New Delhi: A doctor in the AIIMS's Paediatrics Department was found hanging at his residence near the hospital, police said Friday. The decomposed body of Mohit Singha, 40, was found in a house in south Delhi's Gautam Nagar. The police control room was informed by a caller at around 3 p.m. that a foul smell was coming from the house, and a team reached the spot.

UP MLA booked

Lucknow: Vijay Mishra, the MLA from Gyanpur in Bhadohi district who was booked on charges of grabbing property and intimidation, was arrested Friday from Agar in Madhya Pradesh, an official said. Bhadohi Superintendent of Police Ram Badan Singh told reporters that Mishra was arrested on a tip-off provided by Bhadohi police to their counterparts in Madhya Pradesh. The SP said that a police team had been sent to Madhya Pradesh to bring the MLA to Bhadohi on a transit remand.

Five arrested

New Delhi: Five men have been arrested for allegedly procuring SIM cards on fake IDs and selling them to unauthorized call centres, spammers and those involved in cyber-crime fraud, police said Friday. The accused have been identified as Usman Goni (26), a resident of Assam, Virender Singh (24), Nishant Bansal (24), Gagan Chopra (22) and Prateek Sharma (21), all residents of Delhi, they said.



India will be one of the COVID-19 vaccine-producing nations. It needs a clearly-defined, inclusive and equitable vaccine access strategy ensuring availability, affordability and fair distribution. The Government of India must do it now

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

RAJASTHAN GOVT WINS FLOOR TEST

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, August 14: The Ashok Gehlot government in Rajasthan won the motion of confidence by voice vote during the special Assembly session convened Friday. The special session was adjourned for two hours when it got underway on Friday. As soon as it started at 1 p.m., Rajasthan Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shanti Dhariwal moved a motion of confidence, which was accepted by Speaker C.P. Joshi who allotted a three-hour slot for debate.

After a lengthy debate, the Gehlot government won the confident motion by voice vote. The state Assembly has now been adjourned till August 21. The Gehlot government is now safe for at least six months, as the Opposition can't move a no-confidence motion within the next six months.

It may be mentioned here that on Thursday, BJP's Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria had said that his party will move a no-confidence motion against the state government in the special Assembly session.

However, the saffron party dropped the idea as soon as the Congress moved the motion of confidence on Friday. The Assembly session came a few days after the patch up between Gehlot and rebel party leader Sachin Pilot, marking a happy ending to the over a month-long political uncertainty in the state. Pilot was provided a new seating arrangement in the Assembly, where his seat was shifted to the second row from the first row earlier.

During the debate, when Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Singh Rathore was re-



peatedly taking his name, former Deputy CM Pilot stood up and told the Speaker, "I was wondering that my seat has been shifted. This looks like a border, with the ruling government one side and the opposition on the other. Those being sent to the borders are the strongest. There may be bombardment at this border, but we will be the armour and keep everything safe."

He also said, "We had raised our concerns with a 'doctor'. Now all of us stand here unitedly after receiving 'treatment'." Pilot said that many facts will come to the fore in the coming days.

Earlier, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Dhariwal said that Amit Shah could not succeed in Rajasthan.

Rajendra Singh Rathore immediately objected to the reference to Union Minister Shah. Dhariwal then said that just as Akbar was taught a lesson by Maharana Pratap, similarly the BJP was shown the door by the brave sons of Rajasthan who nullified their plans to topple the elected state government.

People turn to 'Kadha' to keep virus at bay

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 14: With a cure for coronavirus still not known, more and more people are turning to Ayurvedic 'Kadha' prescriptions to keep the virus at bay.

In a new start-up, kiosks selling Kadhas have sprung in at several places, especially those frequented by morning walkers.

"We used to sell juices of bottle gourd, bitter gourd here, but now we have added Kadha and the majority of our customers prefer a glass of this Ayurvedic concoction," said Ramesh Sharma who sets up a stall near a park in Indira Nagar locality every morning.

Ramesh claims that his wife and mother prepare the Kadha by boiling various species, including cardamom, ginger, nutmeg, peppercorns, basil leaves, cinnamon, honey and turmeric. However, he admitted that he was not aware of the quantity

of spices that should go into the making of the decoction.

He sells a small glass of the concoction for Rs 40 and many customers even get it packed for home. Swadesh Sharma, a septuagenarian, said, "I drink one cup and take home three

cups. My wife and I drink this Kadha twice a day."

Ravindra Kumar, another morning walker and a regular Kadha customer, said that

preparing the decoction at home was a cumbersome task.

"My wife and I go to work and we barely get time to cook a meal. Preparing the Kadha takes a lot of time so we drink a cup here," he said.

"This is in a powder form and you simply have to boil it in water. The spices are in measured quantities and there is no need to even strain the decoction," said Mohan Lal, who sells packets of the Kadha powder in his grocery store in Mahanagar area.



4 OF FAMILY FOUND DEAD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, August 14: Four members of a family were found dead under suspicious circumstances in Telangana's Wanaparthy district Friday, police said.

The bodies of a woman, her daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter were found lying in different parts of their house in Nagpur village of Revalli mandal.

As nobody had come out of the house in the morning, the neighbours went in only to find all family members lying dead. They immediately alerted the police, which shifted the bodies for autopsy and took up the investigations. A police officer said they were trying to find if the family committed suicide or somebody murdered them. Police found lemon, coconut and incense sticks near the body of Khawaja Pasha close to the boundary wall on the rear side of the house. A pit was also dug in the premises. Police said they were investigating if the deaths were related to witchcraft.

MONSOON FURY



Flood-affected people move on banana rafts, following heavy rain in Nalbari district, Friday

PTI PHOTO

TOP COURT REFUSES TO INTERFERE

A bench headed by Justice L. Nageswara Rao noted that there is a worldwide view that judiciary should not interfere in executive decisions in an emergency situation like Covid-19 pandemic

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 14: The Supreme Court Friday said it is not in favour of appointing a commission of inquiry into the alleged mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

A bench headed by Justice L. Nageswara Rao noted that there is a worldwide view that judiciary should not interfere in executive decisions in an emergency situation like Covid-19 pandemic.

The top court did not pass any order on the plea seeking an independent inquiry through a commission, headed by retired apex court judge, into alleged gross mismanagement in the Covid-19 pandemic, and adjourned the matter for next week.

The top court queried the petitioners counsel to show it the violation of fundamental right or law. The bench said it cannot pass an order on a roving inquiry, as the petitioners think that the executive action was not satisfactory.

'MISMANAGEMENT' OF PANDEMIC



A group of six petitioners, including retired bureaucrats, filed the plea through advocate Prashant Bhushan claiming that Centre's response to the pandemic and its deleterious impact on the lives and livelihoods of citizens of the country is a definite matter of public concern and warrants appointment of a Commission.

The plea contended that the in-

quiry is essential with respect to the failure of the Centre to undertake timely and effective measures for containing the transmission of the disease within India even after being notified about it by WHO in early January.

"Failure of the respondent (Centre) to adhere to its statutory obligations under the Disaster Management Act 2005, including

constitution of and consultation with advisory committees consisting of experts under Section 7, drawing up a National Plan under Section 11A," said the plea.

The petitioners contended that the Centre failed to consult the national task force appointed by it on March 18, which consisted of experts in the field of epidemiology and public health prior ahead of the imposition of the nationwide lockdown and its subsequent extensions.

The plea claimed that the lapses on the part of the Centre while dealing with Covid-19 pandemic have led to a severe infringement of the fundamental rights of the people. "Firstly, the respondent (Centre) failed to nip the problem in the bud by conducting effective screening and surveillance of international passengers coming into India...." said the plea. Criticizing the government's decision to declare a lockdown, the plea said it was "arbitrary, irrational and without due consultation with experts or state governments".

Tight security across Kashmir

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, August 14: The broad daylight killing of two local policemen by terrorists Friday has forced authorities to heighten security across the Kashmir Valley.

The terror attack took place on the eve of Independence Day despite intelligence inputs about such a possibility. The two victims were part of a deployment party on the Srinagar-Baramulla national highway in Nowgam area of Srinagar district. Another policeman was also injured in this hit and run terror strike.

Vijay Kumar, IGP (Kashmir) rushed to the spot immediately following the incident. He said that the terrorists who carried out the attack belonged to the banned Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit.

"We have identified them. They belong to the Jaish outfit. The po-



lice party did not retaliate to avoid civilian casualties. "We had intelligence inputs about such an attack and we have put all security personnel on high alert. The militants always try such things around August 15. "The death of two of our jawans is unfortunate," said the IGP.

He however, refused to accept that the attack had taken place because of a security lapse. Given their past experience, the security

forces have already sounded a red alert across Kashmir and random checking of vehicles entering Srinagar city has been going on besides electronic surveillance by CCTV cameras and drones for the last three days.

Sniffer dogs have also been deployed around all sensitive security installations in Srinagar city where the main Independence Day parade is scheduled to be held Saturday.

HAPUR RAPE ACCUSED HELD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 14: Uttar Pradesh Police Friday arrested Dalpat, the man accused of kidnapping and brutally raping a six-year-old girl in Hapur district.

Dalpat, was shot in the leg when he snatched a policeman's gun and tried to flee after his arrest, said the police who managed to arrest him more than a week after the minor girl was attacked. The girl was kidnapped on August 6 evening when she was playing outside her house in Garhmukteshwar Kotwali area. She was found a day later in critical condition in a field where the accused left her to die. The victim has been undergoing treatment in Meerut and her condition remains critical.

Hapur police chief Sanjeev Suman said: "Dalpat was taken to the site of the crime for investigation after his arrest where he snatched a policeman's pistol and tried to fire at them. He was hit on the leg in retaliatory firing, and has been admitted to a hospital."

The doctor at the hospital said Dalpat has a bullet injury in his leg but was out of danger. Dalpat will be interrogated as soon as he is out of the hospital, a police official added. Earlier this week, the police had released a photo of Dalpat, days after three sketches were released based on the statements of the girl's parents and neighbours. For the last few days Dalpat carried a reward of Rs 50,000 as police sought information about the attacker and was under pressure to solve the case. Earlier on Friday, the Amroha police had found a set of clothes, an identity card and a purported suicide note from Dalpat that said that he did not want to be killed in an encounter and was choosing other means to end his life.

On I-Day eve, Prez issues veiled warning to China

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 14: In a veiled message to China amid the border standoff, President Ram Nath Kovind Friday asserted that while India believes in peace it is also capable of giving a befitting response to any attempt of aggression as he said "some in our neighbourhood" tried to carry out "misadventure of expansion".

In his address to the nation on the eve of the 74th Independence Day, Kovind also spoke about the 'Aatmanirbhar' initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and allayed fears of foreign investors saying India's self-reliance means being self-sufficient without alienating or creating distance

from the world, with which it would continue to engage.

Touching upon the COVID-19 pandemic, Kovind said the nation is indebted to doctors, nurses and other health workers who have been continuously on the forefront of the fight against the disease which has disrupted all activities world over and taken a huge toll.

He also complimented the Modi government, noting it is very reassuring to note that the Centre while anticipating the tremendous challenge responded effectively and well in time. "For a country so vast and diverse with high population density, meeting this challenge requires super-human efforts."

Without taking China's name, the President said "while the world



community needs to fight together against the greatest challenge (COVID-19) before humanity, some in our neighbourhood tried to carry out their misadventure of expan-

sion." He saluted the brave soldiers who laid down their lives defending the country's borders.

"Those worthy sons of 'Bharat Mata' lived and died for national pride. The entire nation salutes the martyrs of Galwan Valley. Every Indian feels grateful to their family members," he said. Twenty personnel of the Indian army were killed during clashes with the Chinese PLA in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh on June 15.

"Their bravery in combat has demonstrated that while we believe in peace, we are also capable of giving a befitting response to any attempt of aggression. We are proud of the members of our Armed Forces, paramilitary forces and police personnel who protect the bor-

ders, and ensure our internal security."

The President also said construction of the temple at Shri Ram Jannabhoomi in Ayodhya "was indeed a moment of pride for all". Prime Minister Modi performed the 'Bhoomi Pujan' for the Ram temple August 5. "People of the country maintained restraint and patience for a long time and reposed unflinching trust in the judicial system. The issue of Ram Jannabhoomi was resolved through judicial process."

All concerned parties and the people respectfully accepted the verdict of the Supreme Court and displayed before the world, Indian ethos of peace, non-violence, love and harmony, he said.

of the day quote

The Centre's ongoing peace talks with the NSCN-IM in Delhi won't affect the territorial boundaries

N BIREN SINGH | MANIPUR CM

On the eve of the Independence Day, the camp is a tribute to both fallen white coat warriors and the Kargil martyrs. We must remember the ultimate sacrifice made by the COVID warriors including doctors, nurses or paramedical staff while saving people's lives in the pandemic

HARSH VARDHAN | UNION MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

The upcoming festival of Ganesh Chaturthi should be celebrated in a personalised manner on a smaller scale in view of the spike in Covid-19 cases in Goa

VISHWAJIT RANE | GOA HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

J'khand unveils new emblem

Ranchi: Jharkhand Governor Draupdi Murmu Friday unveiled the new emblem of the state in the presence of state Chief Minister Hemant Soren. The unveiling ceremony took place at Aryabhat auditorium in presence of the Chief Minister, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader Shibui Soren and other people. The new emblem has the Ashoka emblem enclosed within concentric circles, state tribal dance celebration motifs, the Palash flower also known as the flame of the forest and elephants. The verdant green colour in the emblem symbolises the greenery of the state blessed with natural beauty and resources.

Family vandalises Agra hospital

Agra (UP): Family members of a patient, who died during the treatment, vandalised a private hospital in Agra and thrashed the staff alleging carelessness by the doctors and overcharging. The hospital is owned by former Samajwadi Party MLA Rajendra Singh. Rajendra Singh, the owner of GR Hospital, said that the patient, Nahar Singh (50), was admitted in a critical condition on July 19. He was shifted from SN Medical College. The patient was kept at the Intensive Care Unit on a high oxygen flow for over three weeks as he was suffering from acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Man, son killed

Azamgarh (Uttar Pradesh): A father and his son were shot dead by some unidentified assailants in a Uttar Pradesh village in Azamgarh district. According to reports, Mithai Yadav and his son Tej Yadav were attacked in front of their house at Rasoolpur Dudhahar village on Thursday night. Hiralal died on the spot while Tej succumbed to gunshot injuries at the Lalpur Community Health Centre while undergoing treatment, a Deogaon Kotwali circle police official said that the incident could be fallout of political rivalry.

Exotic birds seized

Kolkata: The BSF seized a pair of exotic toucans from near the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, officials said Friday. The birds, worth around Rs 14 lakh, were seized in a search operation conducted by a special team of the Border Security Force (BSF) in the forest area near the Angraill border outpost on Thursday, they said. During the search operation, the BSF team spotted two persons hiding behind the bushes, officials said.

BANGALORE RIOTS

MLA's NEPHEW 'ADMITS' TO POSTING REMARK

"In the course of questioning, Naveen admitted to have posted the derogatory remark after denying it earlier and claiming that his Facebook account was hacked, when he was arrested on August 12," Bangalore East Deputy Commissioner of Police SD Sharanappa said

INDO-ASIAN NEW SERVICE

Bangalore, August 14: Karnataka Congress legislator's nephew P Naveen has admitted to the posting of a derogatory remark on Facebook, which triggered riots in the city's eastern suburb on August 11, police said Friday.

"In the course of questioning, Naveen admitted to have posted the derogatory remark after denying it earlier and claiming that his Facebook account was hacked, when he was arrested on August 12," Bengaluru East Deputy Commissioner of Police SD Sharanappa said here.

Naveen, 26, is a nephew of Congress MLA Akhanda Srinivas Murthy from Pulakeshinagar (reserve) segment in the city's north-eastern suburb. "Naveen is in our custody for investigation into the riots, as it was his provocative post on the social media that instigated a mob to commit violence, in which his uncle's (Murthy) house was burnt and one of our police stations in the area (DJ Halli) was attacked and damaged," Sharanappa said.

Opposition Congress claimed that "inordinate delay" in acting against Naveen by the police even after a complaint against him for the derogatory post led to the protests and subsequent mob violence in which a number of vehicles were burnt and public property destroyed.



ANDHRA MAN KILLS SON

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Visakhapatnam, August 14: In a shocking incident, a man brutally hammered his 40-year-old son to death over a property dispute in the coastal city of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. The macabre act just outside their house at Pendurthi was caught on a CCTV footage, police said.

Accused Veer Raju is seen picking up a hammer, moving closer to his son sitting on a stool, from behind and then hitting him on his head.

The man showed no mercy even after his son collapsed in a pool of blood and continued to hammer him on his head. The accused is also seen walking up to the gate and then turning back to hammer the victim again.

The incident occurred

"Had the police acted swiftly by arresting Naveen soon after the complaint was lodged against him in the DJ Halli police station by the aggrieved party, mob violence, arson and rioting would not have occurred and three lives would have been saved," Congress spokesman MA Saleem said here.

When caning and tear gas failed to control the mob from attacking the police station, police fired shots, in which three area youths died. "Though Naveen is related to Murthy, he is a BJP supporter, as evident from a post on his Facebook account in which he claimed to have voted for the BJP in the May 2019 Lok Sabha elections," asserted Saleem.

Besides investigating Naveen's political leanings, police are looking into his call records and postings in social media accounts like Whatsapp to ascertain if he was acting alone or with others.

In all, 206 accused have been arrested so far in connection with the riots, including 60 earlier in the day. Those held included Kaleem Pasha, husband of Congress corporator Irshad Begum from the Nagwara civic ward in the city's eastern suburb. "Though Pasha is one of the signatories in the complaint against Naveen, he is alleged to have instigated the unruly mob to set Murthy's house on fire and attack the police station," a police source said.

The Kanyashree scheme, started in 2013, has won the UN (first prize) award. Nearly 67 lakh girls have been empowered through this unique scheme. Girls are the assets of our nation and we are proud of them

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

WAR AGAINST VIRUS

Students of Jadavpur University have made an electronic mask which will be able to annihilate any virus in close proximity to the person wearing it, an official said



JOYOUS MOMENT



Women cheer with a Tricolour on the eve of Independence Day in Lucknow, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Covid tally crosses 24L-mark

Notably, the case fatality rate, which is the proportion of people who die from the disease among individuals diagnosed, has dropped to 1.96 per cent, the ministry said

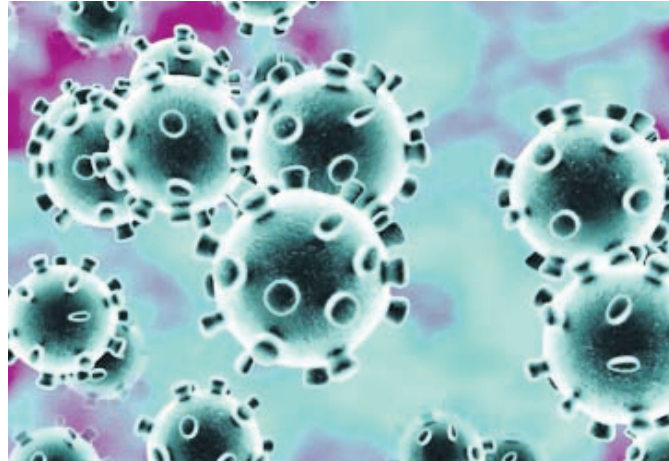
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 14: India's Covid-19 tally crossed the 24-lakh mark Friday with 64,553 new cases in 24 hours, while the toll climbed to 48,040 with 1,007 more fatalities, said the Health Ministry.

The actual caseload of the country is the active cases, which currently stands at 6,61,595.

Notably, the case fatality rate, which is the proportion of people who die from the disease among individuals diagnosed, has dropped to 1.96 per cent, the ministry said. The country had touched the 20-lakh mark on August 7 and added more than four lakh cases in seven days. The silver lining, however, is that the gap between recoveries and active cases is growing every day. Currently, recoveries are over 10 lakh more than the active cases.

As many as 8,48,728 samples were tested on Thursday, taking the total to 2,76,94,416 samples being tested till date, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Maharashtra remained the worst-hit state with a total of 5,60,126 cases and 19,063 deaths; fol-



lowed by Tamil Nadu with 3,20,355 cases and 5,397 deaths.

Then comes Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh.

On Thursday, the union government stated that it has distributed more than 3.04 crore N95 masks, more than 1.28 crore PPE kits to states, union territories and central institutions free of cost in the last five months. Over 22,000 'Make in India' ventilators have also been delivered.

The Centre has been strengthening the health infrastructure to fight the pandemic and effectively manage it. Along with augmenting Covid-19 facilities, the government has been providing medical supplies free of cost to the state and union territories to supplement their efforts. India continues to be the third worst-hit after Brazil with 3,164,785 infections and 104,201 deaths, and the US with 5,248,172 cases and 167,092 fatalities.

926 personnel selected for police medals on I-Day

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 14: A total of 926 officials of various state police and paramilitary forces from across the country have been selected for Police Medal for Gallantry posthumously.

Besides, CRPF Constables Pranjal Pachani, Laju NS, Fatte Singh Kudopa, and Laxman Purty, and Border Security Force's Assistant Commandant Vinay Prasad have been selected for Police Medal for Gallantry posthumously.

A total of 215 personnel from different forces, including state police and paramilitaries, have been selected for the PMG award. Besides, 80 personnel have been selected for the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service and 631 for Police Medal for Meritorious Service.

As per the list issued by

Ministry of Home Affairs, late Constable Eknath Yadav and Additional Superintendent of Police Rajesh Sahni -- both from Uttar Pradesh Police-- have been selected for Police Medal for Gallantry posthumously.

Besides, CRPF Constables Pranjal Pachani, Laju NS, Fatte Singh Kudopa, and Laxman Purty, and Border Security Force's Assistant Commandant Vinay Prasad have been selected for Police Medal for Gallantry posthumously.

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Delhi air quality improves

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 14: The air quality of the national capital improved drastically on Friday following heavy rains that lashed most parts of the city a day ago. People living near the IGI airport enjoyed the best air quality data showed.

Particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 and 10 microns, which are too small to be filtered out of the body, plummeted to 18 and 31 micrograms per cubic making the air in the city "good".

The System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research categorizes air quality in the 0-50 range as good, 51-100 as satisfactory, 101-200 as moderate, 201-300 as poor, 301-400 as very poor and above 400 as severe. The overall air quality index is docked at 45 under the 'good' category.

A different Independence Day celebration this year

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 14: The Covid-19 pandemic has cast its shadow over the 74th Independence Day celebrations across the country. Keeping in mind the required precautions, this year many crucial changes have also been made at the venue at Red Fort in Delhi for Saturday's event.

The event will be limited to presentation of the Guard of Honour to the Prime Minister by the armed forces and the Delhi Police, unfurling of the national flag, accompanied by playing of the national anthem, and firing of a 21-gun salute, a speech by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and release of tri-

coloured balloons at the end.

"No presence of schoolchildren would be there this year, only the cadets of the National Cadet Corps would attend the celebrations at the Red Fort," said a senior police officer.

Because of the Covid-19 guidelines and extended precautions this year, only 20 per cent of VVIPs and other participants will be able to witness the speech of Prime Minister Modi live compared to previous years. Till last year, close to 10,000 people used to attend the function to witness the address by the Prime Minister.

Also, the invited VVIPs would not be able to sit at the ramparts from where the Prime Minister delivers



his Independence Day speech.

Earlier close to 1,000 VVIPs used to sit on the upper level on both sides. But this time, they will have to sit at the lower level, with approximately a 100 allowed. This is

strictly as per social distancing norms.

As many as 1,500 people, who have recovered from coronavirus, will also attend the function. Among them, 500 would be from

the local police while the other 1,000 would be from different parts of the country.

In Delhi at least 350 police personnel who will be part of the guard of honour at the Red Fort have been quarantined ahead of the ceremony at the Police Colony in Delhi Cantonment.

Also, the Delhi Police has advised people who have Covid-19 symptoms to avoid attending the event. "In the case of any invitee experiencing or having a history of any symptoms of Covid-19 within 2 weeks of the Independence Day 2020, who is yet untested or confirmed positive for Covid-19, the invitee may consider refraining from attending the event," said a

senior police officer.

However, there would be extra vigil on the ground and in the sky during the celebrations and multi-layered security would guard the Red Fort and other strategic locations around it. Delhi Police said that necessary coordination has been made with other agencies like NSG, SPG and ITBP.

"All the agencies will work in close coordination with each other to cater to all kinds of threat inputs. SWAT teams and Parakram vans have been strategically stationed," police said.

Plainclothes policemen would also be deployed at strategic locations across the capital, particularly in and around the Red Fort.

of the day quote

We have tried to bring back demand in various ways. Cargo planes are still using Changi, but they are only about 5 per cent of total flights pre-COVID-19

ONG YE KUNG | SINGAPOREAN TRANSPORT MINISTER

Working from home is a big problem for the British capital, as the nation enters the biggest recession on record

SADIQ KHAN | LONDON MAYOR

Through the COVAX Global Vaccines Facility, countries that represent nearly 70 percent of the global population have signed up or expressed an interest to be part of the new initiative

TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS | WHO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

SHORT TAKES

Fresh quarantine curbs for visitors

London: Hundreds of thousands of British holidaymakers Friday faced the prospect of having to go into self-isolation for 14 days when they return home after the British government reimposed quarantine restrictions on France following a recent pick-up in coronavirus infections. In an announcement late Thursday, the government said France is being removed from the list of nations exempted from quarantine requirements because of rising coronavirus infections, which have surged by 66 per cent in the past week.

Kim appoints new Premier

Seoul: North Korean leader Kim Jong-un appointed a new premier during a politburo meeting of the ruling Workers' Party in Pyongyang, state-media reported Friday. According to Pyongyang's official *Korean Central News Agency* (KCNA), the appointment was made during the Thursday meeting.

Islamabad gets 1st 'public fruit garden'

Islamabad: The first phase of Islamabad's inaugural public fruit garden has been completed after 200 saplings were planted on a greenbelt adjoining a major road in the Pakistani capital, the media reported Friday. The Imran Khan government has launched an ambitious project to plant 10 billion trees across the country.

Kamala hit by 'birther' conspiracy theory

AGENCIES

Washington, August 14: Democratic vice-presidential candidate Senator Kamala Harris has been hit by a "birther movement", with US President Donald Trump saying he had heard that she does not meet the requirements to serve the White House.

Former US President Barack Obama was also hit by a birther movement, where his opponents questioned about the origin of his birth.

Born to a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, 55-year-old

California senator, Harris, was named by Joe Biden as his vice-presidential running mate Tuesday.

The conspiracy theory about Harris started following a Newsweek Op-Ed by Dr John Eastman, who ran in the Republican primary to be California's attorney general in 2010. Eastman, who lost the race to Harris, a Democrat, said that there are some questions about the eligibility for the position. The theory was also circulated on social media.

The Biden campaign called opinion piece racist.

"I just heard that. I heard it today that she doesn't meet the requirements and by the way the lawyer that wrote that piece is a very highly qualified very talented lawyer. I have no idea if that's right," Trump said in response to a question during a press conference at the White House.

Trump did not give his opinion on it but acknowledged that he has heard about such claims circulating on so-

cial media that Harris is not eligible to be the president of the United States.

Harris was born October 20, 1964, at Oakland in California. Her mother Shyamala Gopalan migrated to the US from Tamil Nadu in India, while her father, Donald J Harris, moved to the US from Jamaica.

If elected in the November presidential elections, Harris would be second in line of succession after Biden, who is the Democratic Party's presidential nominee.

As per the Constitution, the president needs to be born in the United States

Harris is the first black, and first Indian-American and African-American to be selected for this second highest elected office in the country.

During the news conference, Trump said, "I would have assumed the Democrats would have checked that out before she gets chosen to run for vice president but that's a very serious - you are saying that they are saying that she doesn't qualify because she wasn't born in this country." "I just heard about it. I will take a look," Trump said responding to another question.



It is time not only to change the political system but to restart the country

BOYKO BORISSOV | BULGARIAN PRIME MINISTER

PANDEMIC SAFETY NORMS

A new study has revealed that social distancing during the six weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic has reduced infection rates by up to 45 per cent in Europe, according to the University of Southern Denmark



UAE and Israel establish diplomatic ties

AGENCIES

Dubai/Jerusalem/Washington, August 14: In a major diplomatic breakthrough, the UAE Thursday became the first Gulf country and the third in the Arab world to establish diplomatic relations with Israel as part of a deal to halt the controversial annexation of parts of the West Bank that Palestinians see as a part of their future state.

US President Donald Trump took to Twitter to break the news saying, "Huge breakthrough today Historic Peace Agreement between our two GREAT friends, Israel and the United Arab Emirates!". A White House announcement said that the leaders of the US, Israel and the UAE "spoke today and agreed to the full normalisation of relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates".

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has often boasted about Israel's close relations with states in the Arab world under his leadership, even without normalised ties, tweeted minutes later simply saying, "Yom Histori" (Historic Day) in Hebrew.

UAE's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, was a bit guarded in his Twitter message



Benjamin Netanyahu & Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

saying "The UAE and Israel also agreed to cooperation and setting a roadmap towards establishing a bilateral relationship", highlighting that "an agreement was reached to stop further Israeli annexation of Palestinian territories".

A joint statement from the United States, Israel and the UAE said that "this historic diplomatic breakthrough will advance peace in the Middle East region and is a testament to the bold diplomacy and vision of the three leaders and the courage of the United Arab Emirates and Israel to chart a new path that will unlock the great potential in the region".

Close neighbours, Jordan and Egypt, are the only two other Arab states to have diplomatic ties with Israel under peace agreements that

have weathered several storms over the decades to hold firm.

Many believe that the big diplomatic breakthrough is going to politically boost Trump's electoral prospects and also strengthen Netanyahu as he battles regular protests calling for his resignation due to the corruption trial against him and failure in the proper handling of the coronavirus crisis.

According to the joint statement, delegations from Israel and the UAE will meet in the coming weeks to sign bilateral agreements regarding investment, tourism, direct flights, security, telecommunications, technology, energy, healthcare, culture, the environment, the establishment of reciprocal embassies, and other areas of mutual benefit.

The statement also said that, as a result of this diplomatic breakthrough and at the request of President Trump with the support of the UAE, "Israel will suspend declaring sovereignty over areas outlined in the President's Vision for Peace and focus its efforts now on expanding ties with other countries in the Arab and Muslim world."

Netanyahu had previously planned to annex parts of the Israeli occupied West Bank, viewing the White House's plan released in January as an opportunity to extend Israeli sovereignty to parts of the disputed territory. In recent months, UAE officials have been vocal in warning Netanyahu against plans to annex much of the West Bank and Jordan valley.

UN, Arab and European officials warned that the move would effectively end any hope of a two-state solution with an independent Palestine that has East Jerusalem as its capital. Under the deal, the UAE and Israel will also immediately expand cooperation on the treatment of and the development of a vaccine for the coronavirus. Working together, these efforts will help save Muslim, Jewish, and Christian lives throughout the region.

Lanka appoints ex-military man as new Foreign Secy

AGENCIES

Colombo, August 14: The Sri Lankan government Friday appointed an ex-commander of the Navy and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's key aide.

Admiral Jayanath Colombage as the new Foreign Secretary, becoming the first non-foreign service person to hold the top diplomatic post. His appointment came days after the new Cabinet took the oath with President Rajapaksa retaining the key defence ministry.

Colombage, 62, replaces Ravinatha Ariyasingha, a career foreign service officer. He headed the Sri Lanka Navy between 2012 and 2014, and since November last year, he has been the foreign affairs advisor to President Rajapaksa. This is the first time that a non-foreign service person has been appointed as the Secretary of the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry. Colombage is one of the four ex-military officers appointed by the president to key positions in the bureaucracy after the Rajapaksa-led Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) won a landslide victory in the parliamentary elections held on August 5 that allowed the influential family to consolidate power for the next five years. The SLPP and its allies won a record 150 seats in the 225-member Parliament. Since Rajapaksa assumed the presidency many ex-service personnel have been picked for key positions. President Gotabaya administered the oath of office to the 28-member Cabinet which is two less than the 30 allowed by the Constitution Wednesday.

He retained the Ministry of Defence while his elder brother and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa were assigned finance, urban development and Buddhist affairs ministries.

BEAUTY OF BIRDS



Starlings are seen in the Amboseli National Park, Kenya

REUTERS

NATURE'S FURY

Landslides kill 11 in Nepal

AGENCIES

Kathmandu, August 14: Powerful landslides triggered by torrential rains hit central Nepal's Sindhupalchowk district Friday, killing at least 11 people and leaving 27 others missing, an official said.

The landslides hit Jugal Rural Municipality of Sindhupalchowk district, 130 kilometers east of Kathmandu Friday morning. Five people who sustained serious injuries have been airlifted by the Nepal Army in a helicopter and brought to the district headquarters where they are undergoing treatment, the official said.

"Of the injured, four have been taken to Chautara-based district hospital, while another injured has been flown to Kathmandu-based Civil Hospital," Deputy Superintendent of Police Madhav Prasad Kafle was quoted as saying by *The Kathmandu Post*. The bodies of five children, four men,



and two women have been recovered from the incident site.

Members of five families, totaling 27 have gone missing when a landslide buried 13 houses in Lidimo Lama area of Jugal Municipality, the official said. About 25-30 houses are at risk of getting buried, the official said, adding that the incessant rainfall has affected rescue efforts.

The Nepal Army and Nepal Police personnel have been mobilised to carry out rescue operations. "Over a dozen houses were completely buried and over 30 houses sustained significant damages, while we are still uncertain how many people are missing in the incident," said Kafle.

CALIFORNIA BATTLES DEADLY WILDFIRES AMID PANDEMIC

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles (US), August 14: Crews scrambled to protect homes from a huge wildfire that prompted evacuations north of Los Angeles, and officials warned the blaze could flare up again Thursday as a blistering heat wave descended on California.

The fire exploded in size within hours after it broke out in dense forest

Wednesday afternoon, sending up a towering plume visible for hundreds of miles around. Flames raced across ridges and steep slopes, including in some areas that had not burned since 1968, fire officials said. By Thursday night, the blaze still threatened

more than 5,400 homes and had charged through 17 square miles (44.5 square kilometers) of brush and forest land.

The blaze was only 5% contained. Light winds and scattered thundershowers early

in the day helped fire-fighters tame the flames somewhat but Friday's forecast called for hot, dry weather with

"near critical" fire conditions because of possible gusty winds, a fire update said.

The heat wave was expected to last through the weekend, bringing triple-digit temperatures and extreme fire danger to large parts of California.





“One of the challenges startups face is the limited access to finance, which increases their dependence on debt capital resulting in distorted capital structures and stifled cash flows

ASHISH KUMAR CHAUHAN | MD AND CEO, BSE

TRADE DEFICIT NARROWS TO \$4.83 BN

Contracting for the 5th straight month, India's exports slipped 10.21% to \$23.64 billion in July, on account of decline in the shipments of petroleum, leather and gems and jewellery items, according to government data. The country's imports too dipped 28.4% to \$28.47 billion, leaving a trade deficit of \$4.83 billion



of the day quote

At present, what matters most is sharing the responsibility of the fight against the adversity. We would like our (flood) fund to be utilised for providing relief material and medical assistance, hoping the little support that we are extending can prove helpful for the affected families



RAVEE V JUNEJA | CEO, MANKIND PHARMA

It (tariff relaxation) will be a big support for the cruise tourism in India which has suffered tremendously due to the adverse economic impacts of nCoV. It will provide the opportunity to earn huge amount of foreign exchange and generate sizeable direct and indirect onshore employment



MANSHUK MANDAVIYA | SHIPPING MINISTER

The sharp fall in the markets in March provided a good premise for investors to invest in the equity markets. Hence, it's quite likely that many new investors would have found this as an opportunity to invest in equity markets through MFs route



HIMANSHU SRIVASTAVA | SENIOR ANALYST, MANAGER RESEARCH, MORNINGSTAR INDIA

SHORT TAKES

Fortis plans to change name

New Delhi: Fortis Healthcare Friday said its board has given an in-principle nod to change the name of the company and its subsidiaries to 'Parkway' in relation to the hospital business, to disassociate itself from the erstwhile promoters. 'Parkway' is a well renowned and internationally acclaimed brand in the field of healthcare, belonging to the IHH Group, the ultimate parent of Northern TK Venture Pte Ltd. Northern TK Venture is the promoter of the company with 31% shareholding. Fortis Healthcare said.

Airtel to offer additional data

New Delhi: Airtel Friday said those buying its XstreamFiber Home Broadband connection will get 1,000 GB additional data as part of Independence Day celebration offer. The offer is for a limited period and applicable on all Airtel XstreamFiber plans, except unlimited data and prepaid broadband plans. The additional data is valid for a period of six months, it said. It will be available to customers across top cities.

Mobile app for tourists launched

New Delhi: Digital startup firm Xpertnest Friday said it has launched a mobile app for tourists to check least congested beaches in the United Kingdom amid COVID-19 pandemic. "In addition to showing how busy each beach area is, the app provides handy information on the beach lifeguard status, and information on bylaws," Xpertnest Founder Arun Kar said.

Duggal takes over as Vedanta CEO

New Delhi: Vedanta Ltd Friday announced that industry veteran and former CEO of Hindustan Zinc Ltd Sunil Duggal is elevated as CEO of the company. "We are delighted to welcome Sunil Duggal as our CEO. Sunil is a proven leader with a wealth of strategic executive experience. He has motivated and led teams to deliver high standards of operational excellence and stakeholder management," Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal said.

Next few months critical for India: Niti Aayog VC

“With government debt levels at historic highs, and interest rates at historic lows, credit-driven growth is likely to be modest at best

RAJIV KUMAR | VICE CHAIRMAN, NITI AAYOG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 14: The next few months will be "critical" for the country in the bid to revive economic activity and further fiscal measures may be warranted to ensure that recovery gathers pace, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said Friday. He also noted that while early signs of economic recovery are encouraging, sustainability of this recovery will be key. "The 'next few months' will be critical for India as well in the bid to revive economic activity. "... the downside risks are still very real. Further fiscal measures may be warranted to ensure that the recovery gathers pace and does not peter out,"

FM pushes large CPSEs to meet half of target

Sitharaman held a virtual meeting with secretaries of the ministries of shipping, road transport and highways, housing and urban affairs, defence and telecom

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 14: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Friday exhorted large central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) to achieve by next month 50% of their planned capital expenditure target for FY'21 to support economic growth in the backdrop of challenges posed by COVID-19.

She held a virtual meeting with secretaries of the ministries of shipping, road transport and highways, housing and urban affairs, defence and telecom, an official statement said.

The chairman and managing directors of seven CPSEs belonging to these ministries also attended the meeting to review the capital expenditure (CAPEX) in this financial year, it said.

This was the third meeting in the ongoing series of meetings that the finance minister is having with various stakeholders to accelerate the economic growth amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

She asked the secretaries to

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE TARGET FOR FY'21



closely monitor the performance of CPSEs in order to ensure capital expenditure to the tune of 50 per cent of capital outlay by the end of second quarter of 2020-21 and make appropriate plans for it, the statement said.

The combined CAPEX target for 2020-21 for these seven CPSEs is ₹1,24,825 crore as against ₹1,29,821 crore in the previous fiscal.

"The achievement was ₹1,14,730 crore i.e. 88.37 per cent. During Q1

of FY 2019-20, the achievement was ₹20,172 crore (15.53 per cent) and achievement up to July 2020 (FY 2020-21) is ₹24,933 crore (20 per cent)," it said.

"While mentioning the significant role of CPSEs in giving a push to the growth of the Indian economy, the finance minister encouraged the CPSEs to perform better to achieve their targets and to ensure that the capital outlay provided to them for the financial year 2020-21 is spent properly and within time," it said. She said that better performance of CPSEs can help the economy in a big way to recover from the impact of COVID-19, it added. The CPSEs discussed constraints being faced by them especially due to COVID-19 pandemic.

"The finance minister stated that extraordinary situation requires extraordinary efforts and with collective efforts, we will not only perform better but also help the Indian economy to achieve better results," it said. Last month, she held two meetings to review capex plans of CPSEs.

BIZ BUZZ

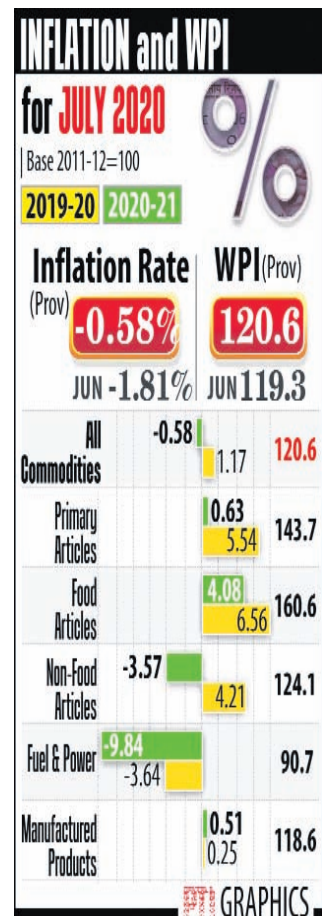
Samsung R&D spending hits record high

Seoul: Samsung Friday said its research and development (R&D) spending for the first half of the year hit a record high of 10.58 trillion won (\$8.9 billion) as it focused on new growth drivers. The figure represented a 500 billion-won increase from a year earlier, according to the first half business report of the South Korean tech giant. Its R&D investment accounted for 9.8 per cent of its sales in the first six months. In the first half of the year, Samsung's total capital expenditure reached 17.1 trillion won, with 14.7 trillion won used for the chip business, reports Yonhap news agency. As of end-June, the number of Samsung employees in South Korea reached 106,074, up 0.9% from a year earlier.



Flipkart eyes alcohol delivery foray

Bangalore: Walmart's e-commerce platform Flipkart has partnered with a startup backed by spirits giant Diageo to deliver alcohol in two cities, according to government letters seen by Reuters, months after Amazon planned a similar foray. Flipkart and Amazon's interest in delivering alcohol in India marks a bold move to make inroads into an alcohol market that is worth \$27.2 billion, according to estimates by IWSR Drinks Market Analysis. The state governments of West Bengal and Odisha states have said that Flipkart can be associated as a technology service provider of Diageo-backed HipBar, an Indian alcohol home delivery mobile application. Flipkart's customers will be allowed to access HipBar's application on the e-commerce giant's platforms, according to the letters, which have not previously been reported.



REVIVING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY



he wrote in Niti Aayog's newsletter 'arhNITI'.

In May, the government announced a nearly ₹21 lakh crore stimulus pack-

EU launches €1 mn project in Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 14: To help drive change towards sustainable housing through empowering women, the European Union (EU) has launched a 1-million-euro project in four districts of Maharashtra and Odisha under which it will train 3,000 women in masonry, plumbing and electrical fitting, among others.

The project is being implemented in Beed and Osmanabad districts of Maharashtra and the Dhankanal and Jajpur districts of Odisha and is aimed at positively impacting two lakh families over the next three years. The project aims at targeting 3,000 women-led households in these four districts and is being implemented with the housing-focussed not-for-profit Habitat for Humanity India.

"This is the first-of-its-kind sustainable housing on a large scale in India under which we train women to build sustainable houses," Raimund Magis, the chargé d'affaires at the EU in India, told PTL.

He added that through this, "we aim at empowering women by enhancing their technical and entrepreneurial skills, creating women-led enterprises, promoting climate-adaptable and green housing support services at community level". Magis said that over the years,



Under the project, 3,000 women in masonry, plumbing and electrical fitting will be trained

the EU has invested over 100 million euros in green and sustainable projects in the country and this is the single-largest scheme solely focused on women.

He said that despite the construction sector being the second-largest employer and women constituting a significant part of the workforce in the housing sector, they mostly work as unskilled labourers and face discrimination. Magis added that this scheme, called Project Nirmanshree, aims at ending this and making them entrepreneurs and active stakeholders.

"Women's issues are important for us and so are environmental issues. Thus, EU is investing close to 1 mn euros in the 1st phase and will increase the spending depending on the success of this project," Magis said.

CM launches two new SBI branches in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 14: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday inaugurated two new branches of State Bank of India (SBI) at Mahanadi Vihar, Cuttack & SME Bhubaneswar on the eve of the 74th Independence Day. Also, Patnaik inaugurated 28 FI&MM District Sales Hubs (DSHs) across the state and 51 new Customer Service Points (CSPs)/Grahak Seva Kendras.

SBI has created a separate vertical Financial Inclusion & Micro Markets (FI&MM) to give enhanced focus to financial inclusion and micro markets in the rural and semi-urban areas. SBI has created 7 dedicated FI&MM Regional Offices at Khordha, Jajpur Road, Keonjhar, Jharsuguda, Bolangir, Bhawanipatna & Phulbani and 28 District Sales Hubs spread across all the districts of the state, to reach the vast population of rural and semi-urban areas of the state.



In this endeavour, Mission Shakti and Odisha Livelihood Mission is monitoring/guiding and extending support in the effective functioning of the Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Odisha.

Patnaik prioritised to provide loan to women SHGs with zero interest. "The state has taken major steps to include women into financial inclusion, CM said. On the inaugural day, SBI also financed 501 new Women SHGs.

At present, SBI is having 4,435 Grahak Seva Kendras/ Customer Service Points (CSPs) for banking services to serve the un-banked far flung areas.

SBI has also rolled out a new SME structure whereby Senior Officials (AGMs) are placed at important Centres such as Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur and Berhampur to function as Single Point of Contact for the SME clients.

NEW IMPORT HURDLES IN INDIA BATTER CHINESE COs

REUTERS

New Delhi/Shanghai, August 14: Chinese companies like Xiaomi are facing delays getting approvals from India's quality control agency for their goods, five industry sources told Reuters, as the business environment deteriorates after a clash on their Himalayan border.

Greater scrutiny of Chinese imports follows calls for boycotts from Indian nationalist groups linked to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party, angered by the killing of 20 Indian soldiers in the border clash in June.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has in recent weeks delayed approvals for mobile phone components and televisions, jeopardising the plans of firms such as Xiaomi as well as Oppo, industry sources in India and China said.

BIS Director General Pramod Kumar Tiwari did not respond to requests for comment. China's commerce ministry and the foreign ministry did not immediately respond.

Xiaomi declined to comment, while Oppo did not respond.

The most serious border tension in decades between the Asian giants has hurt already hurt their economic ties and Indian officials expect the damage to get worse.

"The relationship has gone south dramatically," said one official, adding India was unlikely to immediately approve several investments proposals from Chinese companies. "We cannot do business as usual."

India had mandated the screening of investment flows from China in April but the government has been slow in approv-



ing any since the clash.

India's trade ministry did not respond to a request for comment.

STALLED APPROVALS

A senior Indian official said the government was working on a new standards policy - likely to be announced by the end of August - in a bid to target low-quality products

from China and elsewhere.

But those deliberations have stalled approvals for even branded Chinese companies' hoping to step up sales, one Indian industry source said.

"The products are not getting clearance as quality standards are being upgraded because of which

The Bureau of Indian Standards has in recent weeks delayed approvals for mobile phone components and televisions, jeopardising the plans of firms such as Xiaomi as well as Oppo

many product lines could be affected," said the official, who declined to be identified.

Chinese smartphone brands, including Oppo and Xiaomi, account for eight of every 10 smartphones sold in India. While the two companies assemble most of their models in India, several components

are imported from China.

Modi has in recent weeks called for a "self-reliant India", urging industry to focus on boosting domestic production.

Under the BIS's registration scheme, certain electronic goods - whether imported or locally made - need to meet India's standards. After companies get their products tested in a certified laboratory, BIS approves the applications.

A source briefed at a smartphone maker in China, which has been affected by delays, said BIS applications were typically processed within 15 days but had now "been left in limbo".

As of Friday, 643 applications were pending for registration, with 394 pending for more than 20 days, the BIS website said. It did not say how many were from Chinese companies.

American comes off bench to send RB Leipzig into Champions League semifinals as Atletico Madrid packed back

ADAMS' EVE



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lisbon, August 14: For an American not used to scoring, Tyler Adams sure knows how to make a mark in European soccer. Adams surely came on as a substitute to stamp authority on the eve, which saw RB Leipzig continue their fairytale journey in the Champions League.

The connection of Adam and Eve is quite known to everyone. According to the creation myth of the Abrahamic religions, they were the first man and woman. They are central to the belief that humanity is in essence a single family, with everyone descended from a single pair of original ancestors.

And Thursday's story was quite similar, to some extent though, as the midfielder came on as a substitute to score an 88th-minute winner that gave Leipzig a 2-1 win over Atletico Madrid. It's like the script saying the eve belonged to Adams.

"When I came on I wanted to bring energy and help the team in any way possible," Adams said. "Getting your first goal is a little bit unexpected for me. I'm not a typical goal scorer but I'm happy I could help the team."

Adams scored with a shot from outside the area that deflected off a defender, ensuring that Leipzig's surprising European run will continue into the last four.

"Today coming into this game I was told I wasn't going to start but I needed to be ready to come off the bench and make an impact," Adams said.

Dani Olmo had opened the scoring for Leipzig in the 51st and Joao Felix equalised for Atletico from the penalty spot in the 71st minute.

The result ended yet another title run for Atletico, which was seen as a big favorite to reach the semifinals but again will endure a disappointing elimination. Diego Simeone's team knocked out defending champion Liverpool in the last 16 and was looking to return to the last four for the first time since 2017, a year after it lost its second final in three seasons.

Leipzig, founded 11 years ago with investment by Red Bull, will next face French powerhouse Paris Saint-Germain, which eliminated Atalanta in Wednesday's quarter-final in Lisbon.

The Champions League is finishing the season amid the coronavirus pandemic with a last eight tournament in Lisbon. The semifinals will be next week and the final will take place August 23.

Making only their second Champions League appearance, Leipzig looked more dangerous than Atletico during most of the match at the Jose Alvalade Stadium. Neither team created many significant chances but Leipzig threatened the most with its quick passing and player movement up front.

Some of that fast action in front of the area led to Olmo's close-range header after a cross from the right side. Atletico improved after Portuguese forward Joao Felix came off the bench in the second half, and he equalised from the penalty spot after being fouled inside the area. Felix, a former Benfica star, was playing at the stadium of rival Sporting Lisbon.

Atletico seemed in control after equalising but couldn't stop the late breakaway that ended the team's title hopes again. "I'm convinced that we gave everything we had,"

Simeone said. "But it wasn't enough. We have to raise our heads and try again next season."

Adams, who entered the match in the 72nd, picked up a pass from the left side and sent a low right-footed shot that deflected off Atletico defender Stefan Savic and took goalkeeper Jan Oblak out of action. "It's a deflection but it counts as a regular one so I will take it," Adams said.

Adams joined Leipzig in January 2019 from another club owner by the Red Bull organization, the New York Red Bulls of Major League Soccer.

Leipzig were making their debut in the knockout



round after one previous appearance in the group stage of the European competition. They eliminated Tottenham in the round of 16, but entered the last eight without top scorer Timo Werner after he joined Chelsea. "Tonight we're happy, tomorrow we'll start looking at (PSG)," Leipzig coach Julian Nagelsmann said. "That will be another difficult game, but we'll have a plan."

IT WAS TYLER ADAMS' FIRST GOAL FOR THE CLUB, AND ALSO MADE HIM THE FIRST AMERICAN TO SCORE IN THE QUARTERFINALS OR LATER IN THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

HE COULD NOW BECOME ONLY THE SECOND AMERICAN TO PLAY IN A CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SEMIFINAL AFTER DAMARCUS BEASLEY APPEARED FOR PSV EINDHOVEN AGAINST AC MILAN IN 2005

Man City face Lyon test

AGENCIES

Lisbon, August 14: After seeing off Real Madrid in the round of 16, Manchester City will next take on Lyon in the final quarterfinal match here Saturday, aiming to reach the last four for just a second time.

Lyon, on the other hand, stunned Italian champions Juventus to progress to last eight stage. So it would be foolish to just write off the French side, despite the form Man City are in.

The winners of this match at the Estadio Jose Alvalade, which will be played over just one leg, will face either Barcelona or Bayern Munich in next week's semifinals.

Pep Guardiola has previously joked that he would be nothing more than a 'failure' if he fails to win the competition during his time with City, and on the face of it there is no better time to lift the famous trophy than this season.

After finishing second in the Premier League and exiting the FA Cup at the semifinal stage, Guardiola knows that there is even more weight on his shoulders to go all the way this time around.

The Citizens certainly have momentum on their side following their 4-2 aggregate victory over Madrid in the first knockout round, following up their 2-1 first-leg triumph with a win by the same scoreline in last Friday's return fixture.

That famous victory made it three wins in a row for EFL Cup winners City in all competitions, and six victories in their last seven, scoring 23 goals and conceding only four during that run.

It will all ultimately count for little if they fail to overcome Lyon, however, and Guardiola will need no reminding of his side's struggles

Man City and Lyon have met twice last season in the Champions League group stage, where the EPL side won 2-1 at the Etihad Stadium, followed up with a 2-2 draw in the reverse fixture

This will be Lyon's first appearance in the quarterfinals of the Champions League since 2009-10, and they have progressed from just one of their previous four games at this stage, eliminating Bordeaux in 2009-10

Man City are competing at the last eight stage for the fourth time in five seasons, meanwhile, but they have advanced from just one of those previous ties - knocking out PSG in 2015-16



Man City would like Raheem Sterling to carry his goal-scoring form forward



against the Ligue 1 opposition when they met twice in last season's group stage.

Guardiola has a habit of overthinking knockout ties, trying to get into the opposition's head with his team selection, and it may well be that he focuses closely on those two matches - even if there has been a small turnover of players at both clubs.

Rudi Garcia's men showed ex-

actly what they are capable of against Juventus in the last 16, edging through 2-2 on away goals despite Cristiano Ronaldo's best efforts in the second leg last week.

Lyon looked a little rusty against Juve last time out and that is not at all surprising given that it was just their second competitive game in five months, the other being a defeat to PSG in the Coupe de Ligue final July 31.

ATP adjusts schedule amid pandemic

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, August 14: The Italian Open is shifting to a week earlier than originally planned in September, and the Hamburg European Open - scrapped in July because of the coronavirus pandemic - will follow it on a provisional ATP calendar for the rest of the 2020 men's tennis season.

The season-ending ATP Finals in London are still slated for November 15-22, without spectators. But the ATP said Friday it 'remains hope-

ful' that will change and some fans will be allowed to attend.

The clay-court tournament in Rome is taking over the week when the Madrid Open was supposed to be played before it was canceled due to the outbreak.

So the Italian Open now will start September 14, the day after the US Open is scheduled to end in New York, and will finish September 21, a Monday. That's the same day play will start in Hamburg.

The French Open begins in Paris September 27. That will be followed

by tournaments in St. Petersburg, Russia; Antwerp, Belgium; Moscow; Vienna; Paris; and Sofia, Bulgaria, before the ATP Finals.

The tour said it is still considering ways to add more tournaments this season.

ATP play was suspended in March because of the pandemic and is slated to resume next week in New York with the Western & Southern Open, an event usually played in Cincinnati but moved to the site of the US Open this year.

Rizwan helps Pak reach 215/8 at tea



Mohammad Rizwan plays a shot during his innings, Friday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Southampton, August 14: Mohammad Rizwan (53 batting) scored a gritty, unbeaten half century to guide Pakistan past 200 against an increasingly frustrated England before the teams were forced off because of bad light before tea on the second day of the second Test, Friday.

Pakistan were 215/8 at the enforced end of the session, with Rizwan on 53 and Mohammad Abbas on two. England looked like wrapping up the Pakistan innings after star batsman Babar Azam (47)

edged behind a brilliant ball from Stuart Broad that seemed and squared up Babar.

That made the score 158/6 and two more wickets fell for 18 runs, with Yasir Shah (5) flashing at a delivery from Jimmy Anderson and edging to give wicketkeeper Jos Buttler another catch before Shaheen Afridi (0) was run out by Dom Sibley at the non-striker's end after a mix-up.

England's seam bowling unraveled in the final half-hour, with the field set by captain Joe Root perhaps too negative under threatening skies and with two lower-order batsmen in the middle. On occasions, there were five or six out near the boundary as Root spread the field. Anderson has the best bowling figures, with 3/48.

The tourists trail 1-0 in the three-match series after losing the first match by three wickets in Manchester.

Another victory for England will clinch a first test series against Pakistan in 10 years, and a second series of this pandemic-affected summer having already beaten the West Indies.

BRIEF SCORES (AT TEA): Pakistan 215/8 (Mohammad Rizwan 53 batting, Babar Azam 47; Jimmy Anderson 3/48, Stuart Broad 2/48) vs England. Match to continue.



Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
Government of India



74th Independence Day

Independence Day

Greetings to all fellow citizens

Jai Hind

“ 15th August is a day to pay homage to all those greats who worked hard for India's freedom. Their struggles continue to give strength to millions. Independence Day is an occasion to reaffirm our commitment to build an India that would make our respected freedom fighters proud. ”

- Narendra Modi



Independence Day Ceremony at the ramparts of Red Fort to be live telecast by Doordarshan 6:25 a.m. onwards