

HONEST APPRAISAL

Actor Sonam says, Dimple Kapadia's act in Christopher Nolan's latest release *Tenet* gave her goosebumps

LEISURE P2

'CENTRE'S OBLIGATIONS'

TN CM Palaniswami says the Centre has the moral and legal obligations to compensate states for GST shortfall

TWO STATES P7

JAPAN TO ELECT NEW PM

Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party will hold a leadership vote Sept 14 to replace PM Shinzo Abe

INTERNATIONAL P9

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50kg rice, ₹500 to flood-hit families

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday announced an emergency assistance package to alleviate the plight of flood-hit people in the state. After making an aerial survey of flood-affected areas, Naveen held a review meeting and announced the package here.

He announced that 50 kg of rice and ₹500 will be provided to all families in the villages which have been severely affected or marooned due to floods. Cooked or dry food will be provided to all the people who have been evacuated for the period they are housed in shelter, he said.

As per the package, one polythene sheet will be provided to each deserving household whose house has been damaged while house damage



FLOOD PACKAGE

- 50 kg rice and ₹500 to families severely affected by the flood
- A polythene sheet to each household whose house was damaged
- Cooked/dry food for people evacuated and housed in shelters
- Aid for house damage and clothing & utensils as per SDRF norms
- Cattle feed assistance to dairy farmers

- Exemption of user fees for vaccination and treatment of animals
- Free animal checkup camps in affected areas
- Assistance to affected districts will be distributed as per SDRF norms

assistance will be provided following a damage assessment report. Collectors have been instructed to complete the

assessment of house damage within 15 days and disburse the assistance in next seven days, Patnaik said.

Assistance for clothing and utensils and cattle feed will be given away as per the State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) norms. The Chief Minister has exempted user fees for vaccination and treatment of animals in flood-affected areas. Free animal checkup camps will be conducted in affected areas, he said.

The Chief Minister said recent floods had affected many areas in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Puri and Khurda districts. Many villages are flooded and crop fields marooned while roads have been damaged and communication disrupted at many places. Many small embankments have been breached and the government infrastructure has been damaged, he said. The CM praised ODRAF, NDRF, Fire Service, SRC and the local sailors for their courageous and committed serv-

ices to people during the disaster.

District administrations, government officials and representatives from PRIs continue to provide services to people day and night, he said, adding, many dams have been saved due to the timely monitoring by the water resources department. He directed officials to immediately restore power supply, road links and repair of embankments. Stating that the state is reeling from difficult situation now for dual calamities—flood and Covid-19, he appealed to flood victims to wear masks and abide by the rules of social distancing to avoid Covid infections.

The CM hoped that with the cooperation of all, we could get rid of this difficult situation soon. According to reports, the recent floods have affected 3,990 villages in 110 blocks and 21 municipalities in 20 districts of the state.



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Pranab Mukherjee passes away at 84



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 31: Former President Pranab Mukherjee died Monday in an army hospital here, his son Abhijit said. He was 84. Mukherjee was admitted to hospital August 10 and a health bulletin Monday morning said he was in a deep coma and on ventilator support.

"With a Heavy Heart, this is to inform you that my father Shri Pranab Mukherjee has just passed away in spite of the best efforts of Doctors of RR Hospital and prayers duas and prarthanas from people throughout India! I thank all of You Folded hands," his son Abhijit Mukherjee tweeted. The former President was admitted

to the hospital in Delhi Cantonment August 10 and was operated the same day for removal of a clot in his brain. He later developed a lung infection. Mukherjee was the 13th president of India from 2012 to 2017.

Expressing grief over Mukherjee's demise, Prime Minister Narendra Modi described him as a scholar par excellence and a towering statesman who was admired across the political spectrum. Modi said Mukherjee has left an indelible mark on the nation's development trajectory. The PM recalled that Mukherjee always supported and guided him. Meanwhile, the state government has announced a seven-day mourning from August 31 to September 6. **Spl Page 10**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Who needs more toys? We have whole country to play with!

SHORT TAKES

HC go-ahead to Cuttack Durga Puja

Cuttack: The Orissa High Court Monday gave its stamp of approval to holding of Durga Puja in Cuttack by adhering to COVID-19 guidelines issued by the state and central governments. A division bench headed by Chief Justice Mohammad Rafiq gave the directive while hearing a petition filed by Balubazar Puja Committee. The puja committee had filed a PIL in the high court appealing it to direct the state government to allow the festival with an assurance that it would be held with strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines. **P4**

Nuapada ranks 4th as aspirational dist

New Delhi: Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh has topped in the ranking of aspirational districts by government think-tank Niti Aayog for July. Darrang (Assam) and Mamit (Mizoram) have been placed at second and third positions, respectively, Niti Aayog said in a tweet. Nuapada (Odisha) has been ranked fourth and Gaya (Bihar) is at the fifth place. The delta rankings took into account incremental progress made by more than 112 aspirational districts across six developmental areas during February-June this year.

Gopalpur port plans LNG terminal, petrochemical ind

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The Gopalpur Port Limited (GPL) in Odisha has planned to set up a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal and an investment of ₹2,000 crore for setting up fertilizer and petrochemical industries, an official said on Monday.

Similarly, an edible oil refinery is also on cards, the official said. Recently, GPL Managing Director Amit Saboo briefed Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy about the ongoing activities of the port and future investment on industrialisation in the periphery of Gopalpur Port.



Tripathy expressed satisfaction over the investment plan and projects envisioned by GPL authorities in coming years. He chaired a review meeting on various issues related to developmental activities.

As the issue of capping on transportation of iron ores to the Gopalpur port came up during the discussion, Tripathy said that artificial capping by the deputy director of mines should stop.

While there are no restrictions on the loading of trucks from mines of the state for Vishakhapatnam and Gangavaram Ports in Andhra Pradesh, there is a restriction on loading for GPL.

As a result, the exporters are facing a tough time and stiff competition and there will be a huge loss of foreign exchange earnings to the nation also, said sources. Tripathy asked the officials to take up the issue with the Department of Steel and Mines in this regard. GPL CEO Sandeep Agarwal informed the ongoing activities in the Covid-19 pandemic and the expansion proposals. While GPL requires 1,200 acres, 393 acres have been allotted to them so far.

No night curfew, weekend curbs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: Under Unlock 4.0, the state government Monday withdrew lockdown, shutdown and night curfew in the state for the month of September.

The order issued by Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said, "No authority shall impose any local lockdown in district, sub-division, city or below level outside the containment zones."

However, whenever required to contain the disease and prevent its spread, restrictions on mobility, congregation, operation of shops and establishments, offices and other activities may be imposed in consultation with the central government, the order said.

Similarly, the government has withdrawn the night curfew imposed from 9 pm to 5 am across the state.

There will be no restrictions on inter-

state and intra-state movement of persons, private vehicles and goods including those for cross land-border trade under treaties with neighbouring countries. No separate permission/approval/e-permit will be required for such movements.

The government has allowed inter-state and intra-state movement of passenger buses. Religious places, cinemas, swimming pools, entertainment complexes, theatres, auditoriums, assembly halls and similar places will continue to remain closed till September 30, 2020 throughout the state. International air travel except permitted by MHA has been closed.

Social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious functions and other large congregations

have been prohibited during the month. However, open air theatres and similar places will be permitted to open with effect from September 21

Schools, colleges, universities, other educational/training/coaching institutions, anganwadis will remain closed for the purpose of teaching till end of Puja vacations in October. However, conduct of examinations, evaluation and other administrative activities has been permitted, the order said.

School & mass education and higher education departments can permit up to 50 per cent of teaching and non-teaching staff to be called to schools at a time for online teaching/tele-counselling and related work, in areas outside the containment zones only with effect from September 21. Skill or entrepreneurship training will be permitted from September 21. Education institutions have to follow the standard operating procedure (SOP) to be issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW).

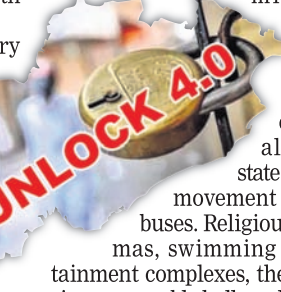
Central team to help state in Covid fight

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 31: The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has decided to deploy high level central teams in Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh following a sudden surge in the number of COVID-19 cases in these states.

The Union ministry said some of these states are also reporting high mortality due to COVID-19. The teams will support the state governments' efforts towards strengthening containment, surveillance, testing and efficient clinical management of the positive cases.

"The teams shall also guide the states in effectively managing the challenges related to timely diagnosis and follow up. Each of the multi-sectoral teams will comprise an epidemiologist and a public health expert," the ministry said.



India thwarts fresh PLA aggression

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 31: India has thwarted China's provocative military movements to change the status quo at the Pangong Tso in Eastern Ladakh. The troop casualties on both sides are yet to be confirmed. A brigade commander-level flag meeting is underway at Chushul to resolve the issues.

The incident is from the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday. China and India have been engaged in diplomatic and military talks to resolve the disputed border issue in Eastern Ladakh.

In a statement issued, the Indian Army said that on the night of August 29 and August 30, 2020, People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops violated the previous consensus arrived at during military and diplomatic engagements during the ongoing standoff in Eastern Ladakh and carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo.

"Indian troops pre-empted this PLA activity on the Southern Bank of Pangong Lake, and undertook



LG meets MoS-Home

New Delhi: Ladakh's Lt Governor Radha Krishna Mathur Monday met Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy amid the Indian Army reporting fresh incursion attempts by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) in eastern Ladakh. Mathur's meeting with Reddy at his North Block office came in the wake of the Indian Army's Monday morning statement which said that China tried to create fresh trouble at a new point over the weekend even as the talks between the two countries to resolve the nearly four-month long standoff in Galwan Valley have been inconclusive. However, the details of the 30-minute meeting between the Lt Governor and the minister were not known immediately but sources said the prevailing situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) was discussed.

measures to strengthen our positions and thwart Chinese intentions to unilaterally change facts on ground," the force said. The Indian Army also stated that they are committed to maintaining peace and tranquility through dialogue, but are also equally determined to protect its territorial integrity.

China has refused to move back from its present military position north of the Pangong Tso. At Pangong Tso, China has strengthened their positions between Finger-5 and 8. The PLA has refused to

pull back eastwards from the 8-km stretch it occupied from Finger-4 to Finger-8 by building scores of new fortifications there since early May.

India has asked China to completely withdraw troops from Pangong Tso. The mountain spurs jutting into the lake are referred to as Fingers in military parlance. Both the countries are engaged in around four month long standoff at the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh. Despite several levels of dialogue, there has not been any breakthrough and the deadlock continues.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX	VARIATION	
SENSEX	38628.29	↓ 839.02
NIFTY	11387.50	↓ 260.10
DOLLAR	73.70	↓ ₹0.03
EURO	87.63	↑ ₹0.2
GOLD	₹51,624	↑ ₹176
SILVER	₹66,765	↑ ₹789

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	35.7°C	37.0°C
MIN	26.6°C	25.6°C
Humidity	95%	75%
Rainfall	4.2mm	Nil
Forecast		
Partly cloudy sky		

PNN/AGENCIES

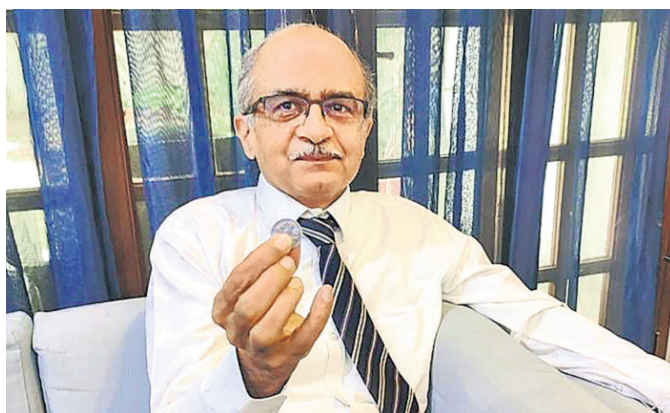
New Delhi, August 31: Activist lawyer Prashant Bhushan said Monday that he will submit the token fine of Re 1 imposed by the Supreme Court in the contempt case for his tweets against the judiciary, but also indicated he would file a review plea against the order.

Earlier, the Supreme Court imposed a token fine of Re 1 against activist-lawyer in the contempt case for his tweets against the judiciary. A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra asked Bhushan to deposit the fine by September 15, failing which he will attract a jail term of three months and debarment from law practice for three years. Bhushan said he has the greatest

respect for the institution of the Supreme Court and judiciary and his tweets were not intended to disrespect the apex court.

"While I reserve the right to seek a review of the conviction and sentencing, by way of an appropriate legal remedy, I propose to submit myself to this order and will respectfully pay the fine, just as I would have submitted to any other lawful punishment," he said hours after the top court imposed the fine.

"I have had the greatest respect for the institution of the Supreme Court. I have always believed it to be the last bastion of hope, particularly for the weak and the oppressed who knock at its door for the protection of their rights, often against a powerful executive," Bhushan said at a



press conference by CJAR (Campaign for Judicial Accountability & Reforms) and Swaraj Abhiyan.

He said the tweets were not in-

tended in any way to disrespect the Supreme Court or the judiciary as a whole, but were merely meant to express his anguish which he felt,

"was a deviation from its sterling past record". The issue was never about "me versus the Judges, much less about me versus the Supreme Court", he said. A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra asked Bhushan Monday to deposit the fine by September 15, failing which he will attract a jail term of three months and debarment from law practice for three years.

Freedom of speech cannot be curtailed but rights of others need to be respected, said the bench, also comprising Justices BR Gavai and Krishna Murari, which held him guilty of contempt earlier this month.

Bhushan further said: "When the Supreme Court of India wins, every Indian wins. Every Indian wants a strong and independent

judiciary. Obviously if the courts get weakened, it weakens the republic and harms every citizen.

"I am extremely grateful and humbled by the solidarity and support expressed by countless persons, ex-judges, lawyers, activists and fellow citizens who encouraged me to remain firm and true to my beliefs and conscience."

He said that these people strengthen his hope that this trial may draw the country's attention to the cause of freedom of speech and judicial accountability and reform. "What is very heartening is that this case has become a watershed moment for freedom of speech and seems to have encouraged many people to stand up and speak out against the injustices in our society."

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You already feel deeply connected to the universe. But today, you may want to particularly thank God for all His small mercies. You cherish your loved ones even more today, says Ganesha, and you may spend lavishly on people dear to you.

TAURUS
Today, passionate and possessive are the two words that will define your relationship with the people you love, predicts Ganesha. You may choose to take pains for the sake of others, which seems to be highly fulfilling. Your good spirit will sky-rocket by evening.

GEMINI
You will tend to be religiously inclined today, feels Ganesha. For this purpose, you may spend some time visiting a temple, mosque or church. You are also likely to go shopping, and chances are that this too is for a religious purpose. May God bless you, says Ganesha.

CANCER
It is high time you paid attention to your family. You have been so lost in work and in making money that you have almost forgotten the very people you have been slogging for. Your spouse has been trying hard to improve the relationship.

LEO
Love, respect and quality time together — this might just be the perfect recipe for a happy family life, says Ganesha. So on this day, make it a point to spend time with your loved ones, and show them just how much you care for them and what they mean to you. It may be a small gesture, but the returns you get in the evening will be priceless, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Communication is your best handgun and creativity your best bullet. Ganesha feels you are full of energy, enthusiasm and exuberance. Creativity, though, will be at its best in an atmosphere free of pressure and strain, cautions Ganesha.

LIBRA
When you aim big, it is the small things that somehow manage to irritate you the most. Ganesha foresees you being troubled immensely by minute things today, but do not let this dampen your spirit, because today is also a day when you shall be receptive to new ideas. Allow for things to be absorbed by you today and maintain an even balance.

SCORPIO
Till now you have experienced all the highs. Today you may come across the lows of the professional world. The equation between your boss, colleagues and you may get slightly disturbed. However, you will make it up by evening. Freshers may look for some career opportunities.

SAGITTARIUS
Upholding all that is right and just will be the high-point today. You will be in the right spirits to fight injustice and discrimination. The day promises to be as splendid as your will. Ganesha advises you to stand up and conquer all today.

CAPRICORN
The wait for some good news may have been too long, but it will surely find its way to you today, says Ganesha. Your focus will remain fixed on work, and you may feel like you are finally starting to like your job. This, in turn, will lead you to take some well-informed decisions about your future. And if the good news comes at the right time, you will probably be saved the effort of finding a new job.

AQUARIUS
You may feel constrained by future plans. Ganesha says that plans are okay, but you must live in the present to avail the cosmic energy that ultimately manifests your dreams. At work, your generous spirit adds to the goodwill you have already accrued.

PISCES
You would do well to make a to-do list today, if only to gain a realistic perspective of how much you want done and how much you can achieve in the time you have available. Making unreasonable demands from yourself will only lead to further delays, says Ganesha.



SYLVESTER STALLONE TO RELEASE ROCKY IV DIRECTOR'S CUT

Veteran action star Sylvester Stallone has announced that he will be releasing a new director's cut of *Rocky IV* to mark the film's 35th anniversary. The 74-year-old star penned all of the movies in the main series, as well as directed the second, third, fourth and sixth installments.

ACTOR JACKIE CRUZ, ARTIST FERNANDO GARCIA TIE KNOT

Actor Jackie Cruz, best known for Netflix original series *Orange Is the New Black*, has tied the knot with artist Fernando Garcia. Cruz, 34, shared the news on Instagram, posting a photograph of her and Garcia's hands, each sporting a wedding band.



SONAM raves about Dimple in Tenet

London: Actress Sonam K Ahuja is currently in the English capital, and she managed to catch the much-hyped Christopher Nolan release, *Tenet*, at a theatre in the city. She says nothing compares to the big screen and its magic.

Nolan's latest features Indian actress Dimple Kapadia along with a powerhouse cast comprising John David Washington, Robert Pattinson, Elizabeth Debicki, Michael Caine and Kenneth Branagh.

Sonam shared a snapshot of a scene featuring Dimple on Instagram and captioned it: "So I went to watch @tenet-film in the cinema today. Firstly the incredible experience of watching a film on the big screen is unparalleled. Secondly to watch the luminous Dimple Kapadia in the film gave me goosebumps. Nothing compares to cinema, the big screen and its magic. Nothing."

Sonam was last seen in *The Zoya Factor*, which also featured Malayalam star Dulquer Salmaan. The film, which is an adaptation of a book of the same name written by Anuja Chauhan, fared below expectations.

ANS

When Akshay tried elephant poop tea

Mumbai: Actor Akshay Kumar is yet to get over tasting elephant poop tea, and he has British adventurer Bear Grylls to thank for the experience. Akshay will be seen exploring his adventurous side on an upcoming episode of the show *Into The Wild With Bear Grylls*. In a new promo of the episode he shared on Instagram Monday, he tastes elephant poop tea, navigates crocodile-infested waters and runs into the woods along with Grylls.



"I knew there would be stiff challenges prior to #IntoTheWildWithBearGrylls but @beargrylls completely surprised me with the elephant poop tea. What a day," Akshay captioned the video. The particular episode was reportedly shot at Karnataka's Bandipur Tiger Reserve. "This whole adventure,

I'll remember for the rest of my life," Akshay can be heard saying at the end of the video.

Before Akshay, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Tamil superstar Rajinikanth have appeared on Bear Grylls' show.

ANS



Nia wins spl edition of Khatron Ke Khiladi

Mumbai: Actress Nia Sharma has won *Khatron Ke Khiladi: Made In India*, beating Jasmin Bhasin and Karan Wahi in the final. The contest was a special edition of the reality TV adventure game show and it was launched earlier this month after season 10 of *Khatron Ke Khiladi* concluded.

The Rohit Shetty-hosted *Made In India* edition of *Khatron Ke Khiladi* featured champions of past seasons such as Jay Bhanushali, Rithvik Dhanjani, Bharti Singh, Haarsh Limbachiyaa, Aly Goni and Karan Patel. Dhanjani had to quit the contest midway because of commitments.

"*Khatron Ke Khiladi: Made In India* started off as a fun special edition, but it quickly became my sole agenda to win the season. I gave my all to every stunt that I performed on the show," said Nia, who has earlier contested in *Khatron Ke Khiladi* season eight.

The season witnessed the host and



action filmmaker Rohit Shetty design some incredible stunts for the contestants. Nia overcame challenges that involved conquering heights, negotiating explosions, swimming through mud and, in one round, surviving a watery coffin.

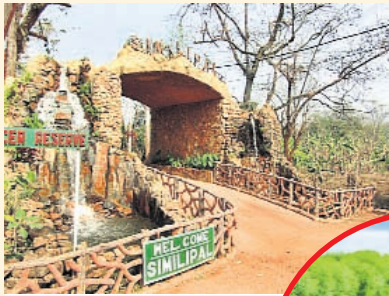
ANS

Travel trends in the post-Covid world

Stepping ahead into an uncertain future, the travel startup ecosystem is preparing for the new era of travel where everything will be changed, says an expert

New Delhi: India may be gradually unlocking, but the recovery of travel, and future of millions of people associated with the tourism industry, is still uncertain. As social distancing turns out to be the way to go for many years to come, travel businesses must adapt to the new trends.

"Stepping ahead into an uncertain future, the travel startup ecosystem is preparing for the new era of travel where everything will be changed and brand-new," says Pritesh Khare, CEO, India Voyage, a travel startup. "We might also see hike in the prices of accommodation, food, transportation because of the market gap and the Covid security innovations and precautions," adds Khare. Here is how he



thinks the industry will change post the containment of the virus:

Local travel over international travel

In future people might only want to travel local keeping in mind its shorter distance hence making it a safer choice for them. In fact, even the aviation industry would consider offering a different kind of seat choices which might be limited than what it used to be pre-Covid.

Rural tourism over cities

In the post-Corona world the travel is going to take a very unusual turn. Businesses that are into local stays, eco stays, village tours, skill-based tours and educational tours might see a good rise in future as people will be travelling with a desire to live sustainable and simple.

Road trips over local transport

Road trips across the nation will be a safer option to take-up. Private taxis and mechanics' businesses will see a rise as public transport is going to be very challenging in the future and people might want to avoid it for a healthy living.

Travelling industry as a whole needs to navigate through its possibilities, restoring the economy of the travel industry into place.

ANS

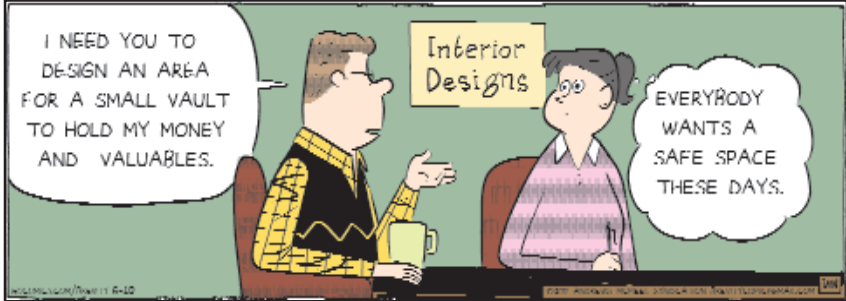
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

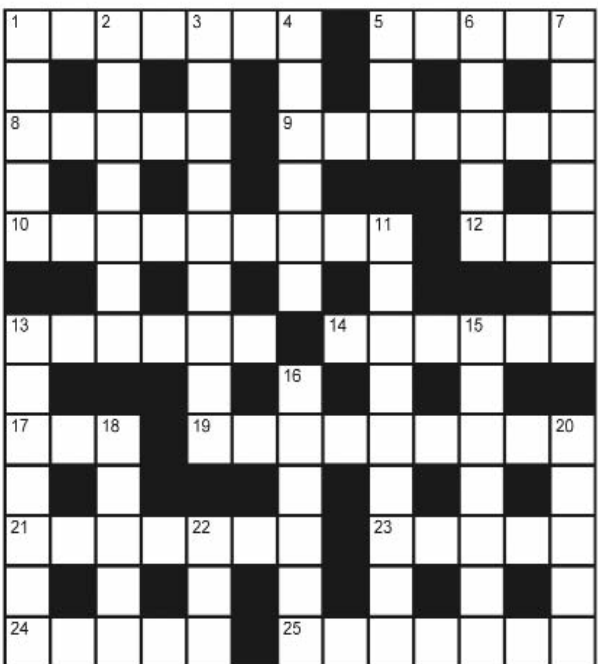


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 1 Statue defilers?
- 5 Motif
- 8 Itsy-bitsy bits
- 9 Fencing cry (2,5)
- 10 Relishing
- 12 Swedish shag rug
- 13 Tear into
- 14 Infuriate
- 17 Pub fixture

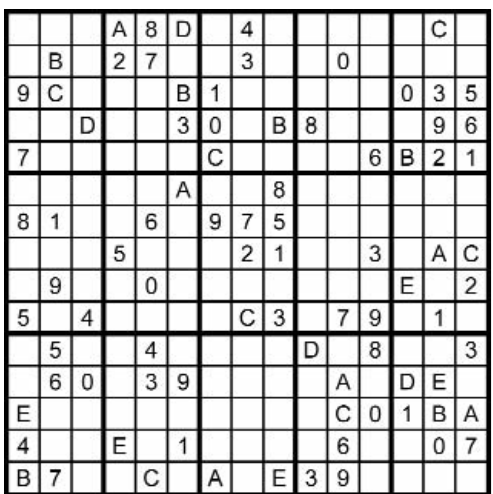
- 19 Terrier type
- 21 Health profession
- 23 Give the slip
- 24 Wheel turners
- 25 Waxworks lady

Down

- 1 Baby buggies
- 2 Furrows
- 3 Oblivion
- 4 Picturesque
- 5 Harbour craft
- 6 Trial's partner
- 7 Raise up
- 11 Bad guys
- 13 Wave catcher
- 15 "Arabian Nights" hero (3,4)
- 16 Brainy
- 18 Danger
- 20 Correct, as text
- 22 Psyches

SUDOKU

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

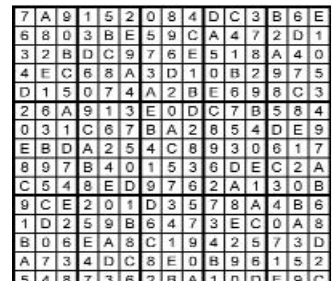


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

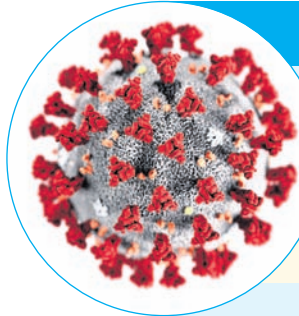


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



BIDDING ADIEU

An earthen idol of Goddess Khudurukuni being immersed near Tulsipur deer park in Cuttack



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,54,57,485	1,77,62,708	8,51,692
India	36,21,366	27,74,978	64,631
Odisha	1,03,536	77,286	492

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT DAY

CM unveils 2 apps, 100 MCCs

CHIEF MINISTER NAVEEN PATNAIK TAKES PRIDE IN THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF URBAN LOCAL BODIES IN MAKING THE CITIES OF ODISHA CLEANER AND LAUDS THEIR EFFORTS IN MANAGEMENT OF SOLID AND LIQUID WASTE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: On the occasion of Local Self Government Day, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday dedicated 100 functional micro composting centres (MCCs) and 50 material recovery facilities (MRFs) in various urban local bodies (ULBs) of the state.

He also laid foundation stone for establishment of 51 faecal sludge treatment plants to ensure larger coverage of this facility across all cities and towns.

As a part of 5T model of governance, the Chief Minister also launched mobile application—Ama Sahar and web app—Swachha Sahar Odisha to provide citizen-centric services. With the launching of web app, the ULBs will be able to submit utilisation certificate online which will foster better fiscal management.

In his address through videoconferencing, Naveen urged upon all ULBs to work dedicatedly to meet the grow-

MAKING CITIES BETTER



The micro composting centre (MCC) unveiled in Cuttack

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF FOUR SEPTAGE TREATMENT PLANTS HANDED OVER TO MISSION SHAKTI GROUPS OF ROURKELA, ANGUL, BALASORE AND DHENKANAL MUNICIPALITIES

- Mobile application—Ama Sahar and web app—Swachha Sahar Odisha launched

- With the launching of web app, the ULBs will be able to submit utilisation certificate online which will foster better fiscal management

- Naveen urges urban local bodies to work dedicatedly to meet the aspirations of people

ing aspirations of people living in urban areas especially during this challenging pandemic days.

Taking pride in the achievement made by ULBs in making the cities cleaner, the Chief Minister appreciated the efforts made by them in the management of solid and liquid waste. He also commended the sanitation warriors for their continuous and dedicated efforts during the pandemic.

Hailing the role of women SHGs in urban sanitation, he said, "Women empowerment is one of the success mantras of our government." Describing Mission Shakti members as warp and weft of the fabric of sanitary solution in the state, the

Chief Minister appreciated their critical role.

With the state's constant endeavour to engage community-based organisations for management of sanitation facilities, Naveen handed over the operation and maintenance of four Septage Treatment Plants to Mission Shakti groups of Rourkela, Angul, Balasore and Dhenkanal municipalities.

A handbook on sanitation which is a compendium of imported notifications, letters and guidelines issued by the Housing and Urban Development department was also released at the event.

The Chief Minister felicitated the best performing ULBs in recent Swachha

Sarbekshyan-2020. The ULBs are—Berhampur Municipal Corporation, Paradeep municipality, Joda municipality, Kotpad NAC, Barbil municipality, Dhenkanal municipality, Rajgangpur municipality, Byasanagar municipality and Choudwar municipality.

H&UD Minister Pratap Jena highlighted the transformative journey in the areas of solid based, faecal waste management over the years.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy, Development Commission Suresh Chandra Mohapatra, Finance secretary AK Meena, H&UD secretary G Mathivathanan and Secretary to CM (ST) VK Pandian.

Suicide attempt near minister's residence

Bhubaneswar: A suspended government official tried to commit suicide before the residence of Cooperation and Food Supplies Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain, Monday. The person identified as Rabi Narayan Padli, a resident of Chitagan village in Koraput is an employee of the Cooperative Bank at Koraput. He has been under suspension since 2017.

State decides to wrap up UG, PG exams by September 30

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The state Higher Education department Monday decided that the final semester undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) examinations would be completed by September 30.

This came at a high-level meeting of Higher Education department with vice chancellors Monday.

In the videoconferencing, the Higher Education Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo said that the UG and PG final semester exam would be completed by September 30. The results of the same would be declared by October 31. For those who don't want to appear for the exams at this juncture, the exam will be conducted in December.

The exams will be conducted online of



fline, blended (both Online and offline), multiple choice, OMR process while the university and college authorities will decide on the process. The videoconferencing chaired by the minister was attended by vice-chancellors of all universities among others.

Earlier, the higher education department had decided to cancel both theory and practical tests of the final semes-

ter/final year of UG and PG courses June 11. Notably, a petition had been filed at the Supreme Court demanding cancellation of examinations owing to coronavirus pandemic and promotion of the students on the basis of their internal assessment.

The Supreme Court in its order Friday had said the UGC guideline for mandatory final examination was fair.

The top court said that final semester/year students cannot be promoted without appearing for the examinations. However, the top court had also observed that the states can overrule the UGC if the state disaster management authority does feel that the situation is not conducive to hold examinations.

The UGC had issued its revised guidelines July 6 to hold the final examinations by September 30.

More rain in store; 47% surplus in Aug

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: India Meteorological Department (IMD) Monday issued yellow warning and said heavy rainfall will occur in many districts during next three days.

The IMD said heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over Gajapati, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Malkangiri while a few places in coastal Odisha and Bolangir, Sonapur, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts will witness thunderstorm, Tuesday.

Predicting heavy rainfall September 2, the Met department has issued yellow warning for the districts including Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Sambalpur and Bolangir.

Some places over the districts of Bargarh, Nuapada, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh would witness heavy downpour September 3, it said. During August, the state has received an average rainfall of 522.9 mm against the long term average (LTA) of 356mm registering a surplus of 46.9 per cent.

Malkangiri district received the highest rainfall of 979.6 mm (107.2% surplus) and Ganjam district received the lowest rainfall of 182.6 mm (26% deficit) during the month, as per report of office of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC).

The cumulative rainfall of the state from June to August 2020 remained 980.9 mm against the LTA of 912.4 mm registering a surplus of 7.5 per cent.

During this monsoon season, 5 districts—Malkangiri, Jharsuguda, Bhadrak, Deogarh and Kendrapara received surplus rainfall while 25 districts received normal rainfall.

Malkangiri district received the highest rainfall of 1589.7 mm (38.20% surplus)

and Ganjam district received the lowest rainfall of 601.5 mm (5.4% deficit) during the period from 1 June, 2020 to 31 August, 2020 (cumulative).

Going by the block-wise rainfall data, 85 blocks have received surplus rainfall, 185 got normal downpour, while other blocks received deficit rainfall during past three months. Only Rangellunda block in Ganjam district has experienced scanty rainfall.

Daya river in spate; communication snaps



POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda/Jatni, August 31: Residents of several areas in Khurda had a harrowing time Monday as Daya River was in spate due to release of floodwater from Hirakud reservoir. A 100-ft wide breach occurred in a dike on Tirimalla road connecting Daya River and Rajua River in the district.

According to sources, vehicular movement came to a halt as Jatni-Puri road was snapped. It is learnt that, over 50 villages in Khurda and Puri districts have got disconnected from rest parts.

Notably low-lying areas of over 30 villages including Tirimalla, Haladia, Benapanjuri, Anla, Bajapur and Anda under Jatni, Bhubaneswar and Khurda blocks have remained waterlogged since Sunday. Floodwater flows 5ft above the farmlands here.

Over 3,000 villagers of Pandiabili and Budhagara are in a state of panic. "Breaches are caused by floodwater on Tirimalla dike every year. The embankment should be widened up to 40ft," local villagers said.

On the other hand, Bhubaneswar Sub-Collector Debabrata Sahoo and Jatni block development officer (BDO) Dillip Kumar Sarangi including several other officials have visited the low-lying areas. They have taken stock of the situation and assured the flood affected people of taking measures.

STATE INSTITUTE OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT, BALANGIR
Titilagarh Road, Balangir - 767001 (Odisha)
(ESTABLISHED BY MINISTRY OF TOURISM, GOVT. OF INDIA & DEPT. OF TOURISM, GOVT. OF ODISHA) NCHMCT

ONLINE ADMISSION OPEN FOR HOTEL MANAGEMENT COURSES

COURSES	DURATION	QUALIFICATION	AGE LIMIT
1. B.Sc In Hospitality & Hotel Administration	03 Years	10+2 pass or equivalent with English as one of the subjects (Minimum 50% marks)	25 Years
2. Diploma In Front Office Operation	1½ Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	as on
3. Diploma In Food & Beverage Service	1½ Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	1st July 2020
4. Diploma In Food Production	1½ Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	for General/ OBC
5. Diploma In Housekeeping Operation	1½ Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	candidates
6. Craftsmanship Certificate Course In Food & Beverage Service	06 Months	10th pass	& 28 Years
7. Craftsmanship Certificate Course In Food Production	1½ Year	10th pass	for SC/ST candidates

LAST DATE OF ADMISSION: 15.09.2020 FOR FURTHER DETAILS
Visit our website - www.sihmbalangir.org, e-mail: admissions@sihmbalangir.org
Contact No.9348849484, 6370180040, 9437140772, 9437030720

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TEXTILES
OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER FOR HANDLOOMS

Sant Kabir Award, National Award & National Merit Certificate 2019
Online applications through website <https://myhandlooms.gov.in> are invited from the residents of India for the following categories of awards for the year 2019 for their outstanding contribution in the field of handloom sector as per the details given below :-

Sl. No.	Name of Awards	Category	Maximum no. of Awards		Total	Grand Total
			General	Exclusively for women handloom weavers known as "Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay Awards"		
01	Sant Kabir Award (SKA)	Weaving	10	02	12	12
02	National Award (NA)	Weaving	20	04	24	32
		Design Development for promotion of handloom Products	03	—	03	
		Marketing of handloom products	05	—	05	
03	National Merit Certificate (NMC)	Weaving	20	04	24	40
		Design Development for promotion of handloom Products	06	—	06	
		Marketing of handloom products	10	—	10	
Total			74	10	84	84

2. For more information regarding eligibility criteria, age, experience etc., details can be downloaded from the website of office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms (www.handlooms.nic.in, <https://myhandlooms.gov.in>). You may contact your nearest Weavers Service Centre for any information / assistance.

3. The Online Application is to be submitted through integrated website of office of the Development Commissioner for handlooms (<https://myhandlooms.gov.in>) & (www.handlooms.nic.in)

4. The hand-woven sample, copy/printout of online application/required documents are to be submitted to the nearest Weavers Service centre latest by 16th November, 2020.

Development Commissioner (Handlooms) Udyog Bhavan, New Delhi

GOVT OFFICES TO
REMAIN SHUT ON
SATURDAYS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The state government Monday said all government offices across the state will continue to remain closed on Saturdays of September.

All departments of state government and sub-ordinate offices in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack will function with 50 per cent employees (all staff including Group A officers) during the month of September and it is to be ensured that the office work does not suffer, General Administration (GA) department said in an order.

The government offices in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack have been given power to decide on the selection of employees who will attend office.

However, the essential offices and services such as Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) and Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) offices, police, fire services, health services, municipal services, etc will function in full strength.

All government offices and employees have been instructed to strictly follow all the precautionary measures issued by the department, it said. In case of detection of any Covid case among the office employees, the concerned office will follow the protocol issued earlier.

The officers/staffs, who have been provided with VPN, will continue to work from home, when not assigned roster duty. They must be available to attend any office work of urgent nature at short notice and be available on telephone all the times, read the order.

SPECIAL TRAIN FROM
CITY TO ROURKELA
TO RUN TILL SEPT 30

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The East Coast railway (ECoR) has decided to continue Rourkela-Bhubaneswar-Rourkela special train upto 30th September, 2020.

It has been decided to continue the running of Rourkela-Bhubaneswar-Rourkela special train (02861/02862) five days a week except Saturday and Sunday upto 30th September, 2020 said an ECoR official Monday.

The Rourkela-Bhubaneswar special will leave Rourkela at 05.10 hrs and will reach Bhubaneswar at 12.30 hours. In the return direction, 02862 Bhubaneswar-Rourkela special will leave Bhubaneswar at 14.10 hours and will reach Rourkela at 21.40 hours.

Tickets are available at Railway Reservation Counters and also IRCTC website. Only confirmed ticket holders will be allowed to board the train, an official said.

Meanwhile, lockdown in West Bengal continues to affect East coast railway trains. The Sealdah-Bhubaneswar Duronto Special leaving from Sealdah stood cancelled 31st August, 2020.

CLASSIFIED
AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary, Angul, I Rashmirekha Panda, 55 years, W/o. Jayanta Kumar Panda, At-CCB-129, CISF Colony, NALCO Nagar, Angul, Odisha, declare that I have purchased a piece of land from Ashish Das, S/o. Brahmananda Das vide Sale Deed No. 3520 Dt.21.09.1995 of Patrapada, Tehsil: Bhubaneswar appertaining to Khata No. 284, Plot No.- 235, Area Ac.0.055 Deccs, that the above Sale Deed has been misplaced and that the said Sale Deed has not been mortgaged in any Bank of other financial Institution.

Sd./- Rashmirekha Panda

Daily nCoV tally still alarming
ODISHA SEES HIGHEST SINGLE-DAY RECOVERY OF 4,053 COVID-19 PATIENTS

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 31: As many as 2,602 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Odisha Monday, taking the tally in the coastal state to 1,08,536, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

The death toll rose to 492, with 10 more people succumbing to the infection, said the official.

The fatalities were reported from six districts of the state—three each in Kandhamal and Khurda, one each in Ganjam, Nayagarh, Rayagada and Sundargarh.

“Regret to inform of the demise of ten Covid positive patients while under treatment in hospitals, (sic)” the state H&FW department said on Twitter.

Of the 2,602 new cases, 1,561 were reported from various quarantine centres, and 1,041 were detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of fresh cases at 616, followed by Cuttack at 236, Ganjam at 190, Kendrapara at 128, Koraput at 127, Balasore and Jajpur at 103 each. Bhubaneswar, meanwhile, registered 404 cases, taking the Capital city’s COVID-19 caseload to 10,425.

The rest were reported from 23 other districts.

Khurda has been reporting the highest number of daily cases for the past several days now. On August 30 the district saw 684 cases, while it reported 762 cases the previous day. Khurda, of which Bhubaneswar is a part, detected 775 cases of COVID-19 August 28.

Odisha currently has 29,758 active coronavirus cases, while 73,233 people have recovered so far. Fifty-three COVID-19 patients have died due to comorbidities.

As many as 17,89,433 tests have been conducted for COVID-19 in Odisha so far, including 57,877 clinical examinations Sunday.



BMC COVID WARRIOR DIES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) authority recorded its first loss to COVID as an enforcement inspector succumbed to the disease, Monday, at Aditya Ashwini COVID Hospital here. The deceased, Prafulla Kumar Behera was 55.

Behera, who served BMC on deputation from BDA since 2015 August, was deployed in city’s South East Zone. He was tested COVID positive August 22 and was shifted to Aditya Ashwini COVID Hospital here. He died while undergoing treatment Monday morning. He is survived by his wife Soudamini Behera (48), son Abhijit Behera (23) and daughter Sagarika Behera (18).

The officer was cremated at

Satyanagar crematorium as a COVID Warrior with state honours. BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary accompanied by senior officials of BMC, Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) paid last respect to the departed soul at the crematorium.

Prafulla had also served Indian Army for 28 years and had retired as Subedar. Post retirement he had joined the BDA as Enforcement Inspector and was later deputed with BMC. Sources at BMC informed that Prafulla was assigned to execute important COVID-19 related enforcement activities in the South-East Zone. The civic body hailed the hero who had showed exemplary devotion and dedication while discharging his duties.

3000-mark Monday.

Meanwhile, Odisha reported its highest ever number of recoveries on a single day, with 4,053 COVID-19 patients having been cured or dis-

EMPOWERING WOMEN



Women self-help group members offer meals at an Aahaar Centre at Unit-VI in Bhubaneswar, Monday

OP PHOTO

PLUS II
ADMISSIONS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The All India Students federation (AISF) here Monday demanded postponement of the last dates of Plus II admissions. The registration process for admission into plus II courses in the state began August 21, 2020.

Sanghamitra Jena of AISF said that the pandemic and flood situation in many parts of the state makes it difficult for students to apply at such a short period of time. The candidates can apply online for admission into various courses through Student Academic

Management System (SAMS) till September 4.

Some students also complained of issues faced during the admission process in the website www.samodisha.gov.in. Students can apply for the courses by submitting Common Application Form (CAF) on the website.

The first merit list will be published September 9 and admission for the shortlisted candidates will be conducted between September 11 and 18. The second phase of the merit list will be released September 23 and selected students will get admission between September 24



and 28.

The spot-selection list will be out at 11 am October 1. Selected candidates can register themselves for ad-

mission between October 1 and 3. The spot admission will be conducted October 5.

The application fee for General

HUMAN TRIAL OF ‘COVAXIN’
PREPARATIONS ON
FOR SECOND PHASE



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 31: Preparations are underway at a hospital here for the commencement of the second phase of human clinical trial of ‘Covaxin’, India’s indigenous COVID-19 vaccine, officials said.

“The Phase I of the trial is still continuing as we are planning for the start of the Phase II trial shortly,” E Venkata Rao, Principal Investigator of the trial at Institute of Medical Sciences and SUM Hospital, faculty of medical sciences, said.

The blood samples collected from the volunteers who received the vaccine were to ascertain how effective the vaccine was in terms of the level of antibodies developed, Rao said, adding that there had been ‘no side effects’ in the first phase trial of the vaccine.

The IMS and SUM Hospital is one of the 12 medical centres in the country chosen by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) for conducting the human trial of the vaccine developed by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech.

“Two doses of the vaccine were

The IMS and SUM Hospital is one of the 12 medical centres in India chosen by the ICMR for conducting the human trial of the vaccine

administered to each volunteer after they were selected through a screening process conducted over a period of three to seven days prior to vaccination. The first dose was administered on Day Zero while the blood sample was collected. The second dose was given on Day 14 and the blood sample was also collected,” Rao said.

Blood samples of the volunteers will also be collected on day 28, 42, 104, 194 for estimating the duration of protection subsequently, he added.

Rao said there was a lot of enthusiasm among people to be part of the second phase of the human trial.

Those who wish to be part of this trial could contact the centre at <http://ptctu.soa.ac.in>, he said.

HC nod to Cuttack Durga Puja
CELEBRATIONS TO BE LOW KEY

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, August 31: The Orissa High Court (HC) Monday gave its stamp of approval to holding Durga Puja in the Silver City here by adhering to COVID-19 guidelines issued by the state and Central governments.

A division bench headed by Chief Justice Mohammad Rafiq gave the directive while hearing a petition filed by Balu Bazar Puja Committee.

The puja committee had filed a PIL in the HC appealing it to direct the state government to allow the festival with an assurance that it would be held with strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines.

“The High Court has allowed our petition for holding the puja by adhering to COVID-19 guidelines issued by the Government of India and the State government, (sic)” petitioner Suryakant Sangneria, president of the puja committee, said.

The puja committee had sought permission for making clay idol of goddess Durga, perform puja at the ‘mandap’ without mass gathering and take out a simple procession to immerse the idol, Sangneria said.

The district administration that



BHUBANESWAR: The Commissionerate Police Monday hold discussions with the members of various Durga puja committees of the city over the manner of celebrations during upcoming Durga Puja amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

Speaking at the end of the meeting, Commissioner of Police Sudhanshu Sarangi told media persons that all the 184 puja committees of the city have unanimously agreed to observe low-key and restrained

was initially reluctant to give permission for organising Durga Puja this year, in view of the pandemic, has now allowed all other puja committees to observe the puja in a

puja celebrations this year keeping in view the ongoing pandemic.

He also informed during the press briefing that the Puja pandals or adjoining areas will not be decorated with glitzy electric lights this year. Similarly, the puja mandaps have been instructed to not construct gates at the Pandals this year.

The attractive lightning arrangements and huge gates near the Puja mandaps usually draw the number of visitors every year. The Commissionerate police have also directed that only ten members of the puja committees will be present at the pandals during Puja.

It also restricted the height of the image between 4 to 5 feet. Playing of any Sound system at the Puja pandals have been restricted by the police while the decision regarding the playing of hymns through mike will be taken later.

simple manner.

The administration has also asked the puja committees not to hold the Durga Puja immersion (Bhasani) in a grand manner.

AISF DEMANDS POSTPONEMENT OF LAST DATE

The first merit list will be published September 9 and admission for the shortlisted candidates will be conducted between September 11 and 18

Category is Rs 200 and Rs 100 for ST & SC category. The School and Mass Education department has informed that no form will be accepted of-

fine. Students don’t have to visit SAMS centres as all the relevant documents of the applicants will be verified at the selected Higher Secondary Schools/junior colleges during the time of admission only. The education department has reportedly decided to conduct simultaneous document verification during the admission.

The entire process will be carried out under strict compliance of COVID19 guidelines.

Around 5.60 lakh students had appeared in the board exams this year; the results of which were declared July 29.


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state

You have no right to judge a man unless you are capable of doing what he does better than himself.

THE MOTHER



CLEAN-UP TIME FOR JUDICIARY

The Bhushan saga may seem to be over but the heat generated will keep the judicial pot boiling for some more time. Everyone must be sensing the unease that this 'harmless' conclusion has created. The long build-up of weeks, for and against, in what had initially seemed to be a tug-of-war between the Judiciary and an individual social activist-lawyer at the Supreme Court spun out as a much bigger headache. Prashant Bhushan has gracefully accepted the apex court's order that he pay a token fine of ₹1 as punishment for the charge that he repeatedly committed contempt of court. Bhushan accepted one rupee from his lawyer friend and obliged the court. In sum, it is Bhushan who won and the top court had to put its aggressive attitude to a whimpering end. On the positive side, it ignited a very healthy debate on the state of the judiciary in current times.

A token fine of one rupee was the bare minimum that the apex court could have awarded as punishment. While it makes some sense as a face saving gesture yet it also made no sense at all. This would be viewed as a careful escape act by the apex court from a sticky situation that it was forced into simply for the bravado of a single judge. Bhushan consistently resisted insinuations from the top court that he erred in criticizing the judiciary and some senior judges of the past who, seemingly, had crossed limits and got the stigma of corruption on themselves. He also 'teased' Chief Justice of India, Sharad Arvind Bobde, for sitting and posing for pictures from a luxurious Harley Davidsom two-wheeler at Raj Bhavan in Nagpur. The CJI was photographed without a helmet and without face mask in these Covid times, a time when the judiciary is itself in a state of near-full paralysis due to the pandemic and Courts are not functioning.

Every democracy, including India, is expected to be a land where everyone has the freedom to criticise everyone. The judiciary, dependent on tax money collected from the citizens had somehow, through a long-established practice built on the British Raj rules and regulations, tried to always keep itself protected from any accusations of misdeed. Those in the judiciary zealously try to retain much of the practices of the Raj which had built such an edifice to help it lord over the subjects of a colonized race. This zealotry was sadly found missing – in several cited cases in recent times – where the actions and conduct of the black-coated justice dispensers were viewed with great suspicion. The long two-month summer vacation, a privilege only of the judiciary across various wings of the establishment, is well-retained even as there is a huge pile-up of cases running into multiple crores of files. No government has shown the courage to change such luxurious systems in the past over 70 years. Judicial reforms are the urgent call of the times as three-quarters of a century is about to be over since India started its self-rule journey in 1947.

A national judicial service is well-advised, but a question remained as to who is serious about changing things for the better. One of the first statements that Justice Bobde made after he became CJI was a call for a national judicial service so as to induct young and intelligent men and women to improve the quality of judges in future. Today, there are many question marks about this quality. Favours are allegedly the main factor at work in judicial appointments, and the collegium system itself is seen as no better than a scenario of the government itself deciding on judicial appointments. National attention, however, fails to focus on such urgent matters and successive governments, in their five-year fixed terms, do not demonstrate a long-term vision to set things right.

There was massive support for Bhushan when he challenged the judiciary repeatedly. A large part of this support was simply because general people have a feeling that most judges and other judicial officers do not play the game by the rules. That perception is the biggest possible damage that could happen to the judicial system. There is great need to reboot confidence in this set up. Only those involved in the justice system, the Judges and the judicial officers, can make efforts to change themselves by not only being clean but also seem to be clean. Otherwise the future seems dark.

WISDOM CORNER

When we love, we always strive to become better than what we are. When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too.

PAULO COELHO

The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Do not reveal what you have thought upon doing, but by wise council keep it secret being determined to carry it into execution.

CHANAKYA

WORDSWORTH

■ Thin client

This is a buzzword that has been thrown up by the struggle of some computer manufacturers to create an alternative to the PC. The driving force is the desire to limit Microsoft's control of the desktop software market through its Windows operating system, and Intel's dominance of microprocessor production (the two together are often referred to as Wintel). A thin client is another term for the network computer or NC, a stripped-down computer without local storage facilities. Data, and the applications to manipulate it, are downloaded to these "client" machines from central network servers. Derided when it was first proposed, the concept has won the support of many large companies, who need to reduce the cost of providing computers to staff. The term came about as a mocking alternative to what its proponents: conventional PCs with large amounts of memory, disk storage and other facilities running Microsoft Windows.

■ Thinspiration

This is one of the key words associated with a deeply disquieting online trend. In the past couple of years or so, a number of websites and chatrooms have appeared which actively promote anorexia nervosa (known on the sites as ana) and other eating disorders as lifestyle choices. (Since 90 per cent of anorexics are young women, these pro-ana sites are usually run by and attract that group. Sites offer suggestions on how to become and remain thin, often through tips on avoiding eating, and how to disguise one's condition from family and friends. Other themes often featured on such sites are self-mutilation (cutting) and bulimia (mia). Thin women, such as supermodels and Calista Flockhart, are presented as thinspirations.

LOL GRASS

A class drawing session is in progress. A student with a mischievous bent of mind did his assignment and reaches up to the teacher's table. Teacher takes a look at the paper he gave her and her face convulses. Teacher: "I asked you to draw a cow



and a patch of grass, but I only see a cow here. Where is grass?" Now, the student's face convulses in a pretentious show, and he replies: "Sorry, the cow ate the grass, Ma'am."

FOCUS TAXES

PASSING GST BUCK



Ajit Ranade

THE CENTRE HAS MANY OPTIONS TO RAISE FISCAL RESOURCES, SUCH AS A LOAN AGAINST PSU SHARES FROM THE RBI, OR OVERSEAS BORROWING, OR A COVID BOND, THAN THE STATES. LET THE GSTC COMPENSATION PROMISE NOT BE BROKEN BY SAYING THE PANDEMIC IS AN "ACT OF GOD."

The past week has been dominated by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's remark alluding to an "act of God". She was referring to the Covid-19 pandemic which is now seen as the main cause of the unprecedented recession in India and the world. Never mind that the slowing of GDP growth, or investment ratio or the stagnation of exports, or the rise in the bad loan ratio in banking, preceded the pandemic. Naturally the fiscal stress was rising, and the pressure of the inadequacy of tax collection was tangible even before the full fury of the pandemic.

The FM referred to "an act of God" as a Force Majeure clause in a commercial contract. The "contract" in this case is actually an Act of Parliament of 2017 which guarantees compensation to the states from the Centre, in case of a shortfall in tax collection from the Goods and Services Tax. The compensation clause says that any revenue growth falling below 14 per cent annual growth from year to year will be compensated from the Central treasury fund for a period of five years – i.e., till 2022. Meeting this legal obligation was becoming difficult, thanks to the slowing GDP growth even prior to the pandemic.

Even the 14 per cent unconditional promise was faulty; but let's not dwell on it now. In the present fiscal year, the tax forecast and arithmetic will go for a toss, and the Central fiscal deficit will zoom. The situation of the states will be similar. But since the states were "insured" against loss of revenue, they were less worried. Yet, after the GST council's latest meeting this past week, it looks like compensation will not be forthcoming. The Centre seems to be abdicating its legal obligation under the Act of 2017, citing exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic. It has told the states to go and fund their own shortfall, either by borrowing from RBI, which the Centre will facilitate, or borrowing from the open market.

This is problematic on several counts. Firstly, unlike the United States of America, which was a



When states go to market or RBI, they will probably have to pay a much higher interest rate than the Centre. Since their tax autonomy is considerably restricted, thanks to the GST; their repayment capacity is also curtailed. The Centre's debt to GDP ratio still has enough headroom to grow, which is fully understandable and justifiable in these pandemic times. Indeed, the Centre can also float a special long-term, tax-exempt Covid-19 bond to fund the extra fiscal push

voluntary coming together of provincial entities, the states of India are the creation of the Union. New states can be created by the Centre, as has been the case several times in the past. Indeed, states have even been re-converted to Union Territories as was seen in the case of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Hence, federalism in India has a different nature from other federally organised countries.

Secondly, the Constitution explicitly prohibits the states from further indebtedness without the permission of the Centre. The states are prohibited from borrowing from abroad. They cannot borrow in dollars, even if the rate of interest is nearly zero, as of now. The recent case of the state of Kerala borrowing via the rupee denominated "masala bonds" listed in London created a controversy. This restriction on the states has good rationale, since a dollar bankruptcy of a sub-national entity can have repercussions on the overall country rating.

We have seen such disasters in the debt crisis of Latin America in the 1980's. Hence, in India, an already indebted state is not allowed to increase borrowing from the RBI or the open market without explicit permission. That is why some states resort to tricks like borrowing in the name of state-owned enterprises, and thus hiding the debt in a corporate balance sheet.

The second reason for not pushing states further to debt-raising is on account of debt-servicing capacities. When states go to market or RBI, they will probably have to pay a much higher interest rate than the Centre. Since their tax autonomy is considerably restricted, thanks to the GST; their repayment capacity is also curtailed. The Centre's debt to GDP ratio still has enough headroom to grow, which is fully understandable and justifiable in these pandemic times. Indeed, the Centre can also float a special long-term, tax-exempt Covid-19 bond to fund the extra fiscal push. There is some discussion about selling sovereign

bonds to dollar investors, or to narrowly pitch it to non-resident Indians. These options are not available to the states.

The parallels with PSU funding are worth remembering. The Indian Railway Finance Corporation or the Power Finance Corporation is able to raise funds from the market at much finer interest rates because of their respective sovereign backing. This low-cost fundraising is possible despite the fact that they raise funds for the Railways or the power utilities, both of whom are typically loss-making. The same logic applies to the Centre raising Covid-related fiscal funds on behalf of the states.

The third reason is that even with the states borrowing individually, the overall borrowing requirement in the national aggregate will not be any different. It will be the same in the aggregate, whether the Centre does the borrowing all by itself or it is done severally by the Centre and the states. You can't fool the debt markets, or those country rating analysts. Hence it is more efficient to do this centrally at a distinctly lower cost, and pass on the benefit to the states.

The fourth and possibly the most important reason is that the Centre simply cannot renege on a written and codified promise, act of God or not. We are all in this pandemic together. We are trying to build trust and a solid foundation for cooperative federalism. The GST curtails autonomy but gets us a unified common economic market across the nation. The states plus the Centre have to forge a common vision for the development of the nation. Balanced growth will need much more cooperation between the states and the Centre, and much give-and-take. This is the time that federal faith and trust will be tested. The Centre must bear the full fiscal burden. Let the GST compensation promise not be broken by saying the pandemic is an "act of God."

The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution.

THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM LABOUR

Care for needs of lesser skilled



Dr Errol D'Souza

THE SUCCESS OF CITIES WILL DEPEND TO WHAT EXTENT THEY PROVIDE INCLUSIVE RESOLUTIONS TO THE CONDITIONS OF WORK AND HABITATION OF THE LESS SKILLED

Half of humanity lives in cities today and almost all the urban expansion in the next few decades are going to take place in the developing world. Yet one in four urban residents across the world lives in slums and the share is much higher in developing countries – it is 24 per cent in India. Rapid urbanisation will put pressure on water supply, sewage, public health, the living environment will be affected by carbon emissions from energy consumption, and urban dwellers in the country will increasingly be breathing unsafe air and dying from ambient air pollution. In all of this, the poor have a high chance of being made scapegoats for the wider structural problems that will be encountered. They often get blamed for the lack of sanitation and poor infrastructure whilst urban authorities continue to struggle to deliver public services that make cities livable and to invest in the future of their citizens.

Demolition and displacement is often advanced as a solution rather than upgrading strategies and freeing up public land for housing

stock. Residents in slums would benefit from the provision of piped water that would reduce their outlays on water of questionable quality, improved drainage requires less to be spent on house repairs and reduces their susceptibility to waterborne diseases that increases expenditures on health, enhanced street lighting reduces crime, etc. All these, if designed with features that are deemed desirable to the beneficiary and implemented with sincere regard for time and cost overruns can even secure consent from such communities to pay for a part of the total project cost from the costs it saves them for seeking substitutes for the provision of such amenities.

The future of urban areas is that of continued growth accompanied by a growth in incomes for those who are skilled. Work requiring unstructured material activity that cannot be automated will be in demand but may not pay enough to enable a living wage and a vast majority of migrants to urban areas will be in that space. The success of cities will depend to what extent they provide in-

clusive resolutions to the conditions of work and habitation of the less skilled so as to improve the sustainability of cities and their residents. Cities will increasingly become crowded and will experience both the benefits and the hazards of urban density. The benefits of productive income generation will increasingly have to be traded off with the drawbacks of congested roads, impure and inadequate water supply, and air pollution amongst others.

Providing infrastructure, improving regulation, and building a politics that involves amenities for all sections of the population will be crucial for their sustainability. Otherwise there is a high chance that the way cities will promote their continuation will be via repression. Blue collar workers will then resort to hustling via opportunistic practices given the vulnerabilities and adversities they face from a lack of institutional attention to their problems. With expanding value chains, the emphasis in policy has been on removing tariffs and regulatory barriers and reducing transac-

tions costs on handling goods and the ease of doing business. This will further increase trade and feed growth including in peri urban areas. For the vast majority who perform jobs involving unstructured physical activity, however, their sustainable future depends amongst other things on improved access to finance and investment in education that is crucial to enable their participation in the high skill specialisation patterns of growth that will emerge over the coming decades. Without these interventions the answer to the question we began with is that migration will not be beneficial for those from rural areas except for giving them possibly the benefit of urban anonymity and a temporary source of purchasing power. It will not be a sustainable solution to their search for better opportunities and livelihoods.

(Continued)

The writer is a Professor of Economics and the Director at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

THE BILLION PRESS

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Monkey menace

Sir, In the Covid-19 situation, most animals and birds are not getting sufficient food due to closure of shops, markets, restaurants etc. Taking note of this, some people are providing food and fruits to animals and birds. This is a noble deed, and it demonstrates our kindness to animals. At the same time, giving food to monkeys is a problem. As per the guideline of the Forest department, dry food should not be given to monkeys. Dry and oily food is not good for their health. It is often that groups of monkeys come to the villages and destroy the crops of farmers. In most tourist places, our act of feeding monkeys leads to unwelcome situations. Monkeys in such places snatch away items we carry in hand. Our kindness should not create a problem for wild animals and people too.

Santosh Kumar Mohanty, CUTTACK

Migrants, jobs

Sir, Nowadays, the unemployment problem is worsening due to the Covid-19 epidemic. This is a difficult situation for many here. Odias who have returned from neighbouring states for fear of the epidemic have not been able to find work here and are eager to return to their places of work. They are upset over the loss of their jobs. The big companies are in a state of disarray and laying off workers. Companies that are still run are effecting salary cuts. The economic situation is further worsening. This will have a serious adverse impact on livelihood. The government is urged to pay special attention to the livelihood of the middle class and the poor and the other vulnerable sections. They may be helped to make a living in their own state.

Pravat Kumar Mishra, BHUBANESWAR

Plant a tree – NCERT way

Sir, By virtue of my long service in NCERT, I would like to share a memorable experience. Apart from its contributions in the field of educational research, NCERT has a system of plantation of a tree on the day of superannuation. The retiring individual will plant a tree as per his or her own choice, on the campus, and nurture it for years. All government organisations, PSUs, banks etc can copy this model for the good of the nation. In fact, every institution in the country should follow this novel idea. This can be a great step towards sustainable development and a show of respect to the Indian Constitution.

Dr Ramdas Ray, BHUBANESWAR

Centre bound to compensate states for GST shortfall: TN CM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, August 31: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K. Palaniswami Monday wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in which he said that the central government has the moral and legal obligation to compensate the states for the shortfall in Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections.

Palaniswami also urged Modi to direct the Ministry of Finance to agree to a mechanism whereby the central government raises the required funds as a loan and lends it to the GST Compensation Fund against future cess receipts, so that the GST compensation can be paid in full to the states in 2020-21.

In the letter, the text of which was released to the media here, Palaniswami said: "Our stance has consistently been that the Government of India has a moral and legal obligation to pay the compensation for the shortfall in GST collections. We had also indicated that it was for the Government of India to find the necessary funds to compensate the States, including from the Consolidated Fund of India, if there was a shortfall in the cess collections."

He said most states and in particular Tamil Nadu, agreed to the implementation of GST and to support the legislation on the basis of the unequivocal commitment given by the central government to compensate the states for any revenue



This was a very reasonable and practical suggestion and was agreed to by almost all States...Hence, I reiterate Government of Tamil Nadu's stance that the Government of India should advance funds to the GST Compensation Cess fund, if need be, by borrowing in the market and service the debt by an extension of the compensation cess

K. PALANISWAMI | CHIEF MINISTER

loss. "Such compensation is clearly assured in the 101st Constitution Amendment Act and in the GST (Compensation to States) Act, 2017," Palaniswami said.

According to Palaniswami the

total compensation due for shortfall in revenue collection for Tamil Nadu is ₹12,250.50 crore.

The Chief Minister also said the suggestion made by the state Fisheries Minister D. Jayakumar at the 41st GST Council meeting August 27 was a reasonable and practical one and was agreed to by almost all the states. At the Council meeting Jayakumar suggested the central government could mobilise resources and lend the funds required to the GST Compensation Fund and that loan could be serviced through an extension of the GST Cess for a few years beyond 2021-22.

"Ensure that the states get their full dues of the compensation in the current year itself, and reduce neither the compensation payable nor the already announced and committed additional borrowing permissible to states of 2 per cent of GSDP (gross state domestic product) under the Atmanirbhar Bharat stimulus package in any circumstances," Palaniswami said.

He also said the Finance Ministry should provide a formal and categorical assurance that any spillover of the compensation due will be paid in the period after 31st March, 2022 and also relax the conditions to permit States to borrow under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme.

According to the CM, these measures will ensure states are treated justly and fairly and also have adequate funds in 2020-21 to meet essential expenditure commitments.

How a ₹1k device is helping Delhi fight virus

Delhi government has so far distributed pulse oximeters to more than 32,000 people for free, putting them at the heart of a plan to isolate most asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic patients in their homes

REUTERS

New Delhi, August 31: Twice a day, New Delhi health worker Kamal Kumari receives a flurry of WhatsApp messages from coronavirus patients, containing either a two-digit reading from a tiny medical device or a photo of its glowing display.

She scans the numbers from the ₹1,000 (\$13) oxygen monitor, known as pulse oximeter, checking to ensure they are all above the prescribed 95 mark and then notes them down in her logbook.

"When we didn't have this, we wouldn't know about their oxygen levels," said Kumari, explaining how her team would worry about patients' conditions rapidly worsening when India's capital was badly short of hospital beds. "Now we can find out in time and safely refer patients to the hospital."

Delhi's government has so far distributed pulse oximeters to more than 32,000 people for free, putting them at the heart of a plan to isolate most asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic coronavirus patients in their homes.

The program was devised in May, when coronavirus cases started surging in the densely populated city of 20 million, sending panicked residents rushing to hospitals.

"If we hadn't done this, there would've been no room to even stand in our hospitals," Delhi's



If we hadn't done this, there would've been no room to even stand in our hospitals

SATYENDAR JAIN | DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

health minister, Satyendar Jain, told Reuters.

In Delhi, health authorities started noticing "happy hypoxemia" - low blood oxygen levels without any breathlessness - that was leading to complications in coronavirus patients isolated at home, Jain said.

For regular monitoring, doctors told Jain that patients would either have to visit hospitals or use the inexpensive oxygen monitors, many of which are made in China.

Delhi has recorded around 173,000 infections with a little over 4,400 deaths. Only 14,700 cases remain active and many hospital beds are now empty.

PROACTIVE MONITORING

Other cities across the world have also deployed the device.

In May, at the height of its outbreak, Singapore distributed several thousand oximeters to migrant workers isolated in cramped dormitories, which had become an epicenter for the virus's spread.

Singapore's health ministry said oximeters allowed workers "to proactively monitor their own health status and reach out for medical assistance if needed."

In India, too, other places have picked up on Delhi's model. Since late July, the northeastern state of Assam has provided nearly 4,000

oximeters to patients in home isolation. Some doctors are concerned that patients may not always know how to use the device.

"It's very important to train patients properly on how to use pulse oximeters," said Dr Hemant Kalra, a pulmonologist in New Delhi, adding that cheap, sub-standard oximeters flooding the market were also a problem.

Jain, however, said the government's program had worked effectively, with not a single fatality among the thousands of patients in home isolation the last month and a half. Oximeters have also helped cut down on expensive hospitalisation for mild cases, Jain said, saving more than 10 times the device's price for each day in hospital.

On a warm, humid day last week, health worker Kumari pulled on a protective suit, a mask and goggles, before walking down the narrow lanes of the Chirag Delhi neighborhood.

Together with a similarly dressed colleague, she stopped at Satish Kumar Soni's home to check on him and three family members who were ending their 10-day isolation period, and to collect two government-issued pulse oximeters.

Soni, a 59-year-old jeweller, said the device helped the family ease their fears and anxiety as they slowly recovered.

"It's not that big a disease," he said. "If the oxygen level is fine, then there isn't much danger."

Pvt schools warned against over-charging fees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: The Delhi government has warned private schools against collecting additional charges other than tuition fee and also asked them not to raise the fees till schools reopen, officials said Monday.

The government has warned that the defaulter schools will be penalized as per Delhi School Education Act and Rules, 1973.

In a letter to school principals, Education Department Director Udit Prakash Raj said such act of schools is not only in a clear violation of directions issued earlier but also an inhumane act on their part keeping in view the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic conditions and long clo-



sure of schools. "These schools are run by trust and charitable societies, hence, as per their Memorandum of Article, are supposed always to keep in mind the charity and providing of education to the students without indulging in profiteering," he said.

He said some representations have also been received from some

private schools and their associations wherein, it has been claimed that since the period of lockdown is over, they can charge the fees under all heads such as tuition fees, annual charge, development fee and some earmarked levies also. "This is not correct as unlocking stage is still going on in a phased manner, hence, complete lockdown is yet to be over and schools are yet to be Open for physical class room learning," he added.

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16 when the central government announced a nationwide classroom shutdown as one of the measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. A nationwide lockdown was announced March 24, which

came into effect the next day. While the government has eased several restrictions, schools and colleges continue to remain closed.

According to the directive by the Directorate of Education (DoE), annual and development charges can be charged from the parents, on pro-rata basis, only on monthly basis after completion of lockdown period. "No earmarked levies such as transportation charges will be charged from the parents during the period the schools remains closed. In no case, the schools shall demand and collect tuition fee on quarterly basis, fees will be collected on monthly basis only. Schools cannot increase any fee in the academic session 2020-21 till further directions," the order had said.



TIME TO REOPEN

A worker sprays disinfectants at a mall premises after authorities allowed reopening of malls during Unlock 4 in Chennai, Monday.

PTI PHOTO

In a first, Tamil Nadu woman appointed ambulance driver

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 31: A woman was appointed as an '108' ambulance driver in Tamil Nadu, claimed to be the first in the country, as Chief Minister K. Palaniswami flagged off 118 vehicles as part of an initiative to strengthen emergency services in the state.

M Veeralakshmi was appointed driver of one of the newly launched '108' ambulances and it is a 'first' in the country, a government release said. Ninety ambulances equipped with life saving medical equipment, 10 high tech vehicles for use by 10 government blood banks for transporting blood collected in camps and 18 ambulances donated by an entertainment television channel group for anti-COVID tasks were flagged off.

March 24, Palaniswami had announced in the Assembly that to further strengthen the 108 am-



M Veeralakshmi was appointed driver of one of the newly launched '108' ambulances and it is a 'first' in the country, according to the government

(PICTURE USED FOR REPRESENTATION)

bulance emergency services, 500 new ambulances would be dedicated to the state at a cost of about ₹125 crore.

To implement it, in the first phase, 90 ambulances and 10 blood collection vehicles at an estimated cost of

₹20.65 crore and ₹3.09 crore respectively were procured. Marking distribution of appointment orders to 138 recruits in Public Health and Preventive Medicine department, Palaniswami gave away the orders to seven of them.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 31: Tamil Nadu's native dog breed 'Chippiparai' that found a mention in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' radio address could run very fast and jump upto 10 feet at one go with ease.

Besides it, all the three other Tamil Nadu breeds - Kombai, Kanni and Rajapalayam - are fearless and loyal to their masters, experts said.

In an initiative to conserve the native dog breeds and to create awareness about them, Chippiparai, Kanni and Rajapalayam varieties were being reared here since last year by authorities of the Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS).

"From the place it stands, Chippiparai could jump 10 feet quite easily and it could run really very fast. It is a tall and robust breed," Professor and Head,



Department of Clinics, Veterinary College, TANUVAS, Namakkal, R. Ezakial Napoleon said.

Kombai, is comparatively more intelligent and has a higher sense of smell, he told PTI.

Mentioning about Indian dog

breeds, the prime minister said they cost less to raise and are better adapted to the Indian environment and surroundings, adding that the security agencies had also been inducting these dogs.

"Among the Indian breeds,

Mudhol Hound and Himachali Hound are of excellent pedigree. Rajapalayam, Kanni, Chippiparai and Kombai are fabulous Indian breeds. They cost less to raise and are better adapted to the Indian environment and surroundings," Modi said.

Other veterinary doctors, who too have a hands-on experience in handling the native varieties in the state, said all the four breeds were highly useful and dependable.

These breeds, once used by royals and local chieftains for hunting and to help protect them, were now being deployed by many farmers to guard their farms and all these breeds do not have much maintenance expenditure, they said.

Of the four breeds, the number of Kombai dogs are "very low," one of the veterinarians said adding the three other varieties were found in many regions of the state.

of the day quote

We have sufficient stock of testing kits for 10-15 days, but more units are being procured from the market to meet the 40,000 tests per day target



SATYENDAR JAIN | DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

Greetings on Onam. This is a unique festival, which celebrates harmony



NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

Almost 10 crore people in the state are covered under the 'Khadya Sathi' scheme



MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

SHORT TAKES

5 migrants killed

Bahraich (Uttar Pradesh): Five labourers were killed and 11 injured when a passenger vehicle in Uttar Pradesh rammed into a truck in Bahraich district Monday. All the labourers had returned to their homes during the national lockdown and were going back to work, police said. They were travelling in a Force Cruiser from Bihar to Ambala in Haryana when the MUV rammed into a stationary truck parked alongside the road near Sukai Purva crossing in Payagpur. Two labourers died on the spot and 14 injured were rushed to a hospital, where three more succumbed to their injuries.

6 civilians hurt

Srinagar: Six civilians were injured Monday in a grenade attack by militants in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district. Police said militants targeted a security force party in the Azadgunj area of Baramulla town with a grenade. "The grenade missed the target and exploded on the ground injuring six civilians," police said.

Shah discharged

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who was admitted in All India Medical Sciences (AIIMS) hospital in New Delhi for post-Covid care two weeks ago, was discharged Monday morning. "Amit Shah, Hon'ble Home Minister was admitted at AIIMS, New Delhi for post-Covid Care. He was discharged today at 7 a.m. He has fully recovered and is fit to resume the routine activities," said AIIMS media and protocol division Chairperson Aarti Vij. Saturday, AIIMS had issued a health bulletin stating that Shah has recovered and will be discharged soon.

SC dismisses Mallya's plea

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday dismissed fugitive business tycoon Vijay Mallya's plea seeking review of a 2017 judgment which held him guilty for contempt of court. The top court had held him guilty of contempt, as Mallya did not truthfully disclose the full account of his assets. He was also found guilty for violating a court order by siphoning \$40 million from his account, as Mallya was restrained from any such withdrawal.

Train mows down 5 deer

Ranchi: Five wild deer were run over by a goods train in the buffer area of the Palamu Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Jharkhand Monday, officials said. According to the PTR officials, the five deer, including a pregnant one, were mowed down by a speeding goods train near Kechki railway station.



The BJP government has been attacking the informal sector over the past 6 years. I am giving you three massive examples right now -- Demonetisation, wrong GST and lockdown

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

MONSOON SESSION FROM SEPTEMBER 14

Parliament's Monsoon Session will begin from September 14, a notification issued Monday said. The notification issued by the Lok Sabha Secretariat said President Ram Nath Kovind has called the lower house to meet on September 14 at 9 am



COVID CASES TOP GLOBAL RANK

The huge numbers have got authorities worried, especially with people in rural areas largely abandoning rules aimed at stopping the spread, officials say

REUTERS

Mumbai, August 31: India reported 78,512 novel coronavirus infections Monday, more than any other country but fewer than the previous day when it posted the world's biggest, single-day tally, as authorities looked to open more sectors of the economy. Sunday, India's total of 78,761 new cases exceeded the previous global record of 77,299 in the United States on July 16, a tally of official data showed.

The world's second-most populous country has been posting the highest single-day caseload in the world since August 7. At 3.62 million cases, India is fast catching up to the United States and Brazil in terms of total cases but it has a lower death rate.

India's coronavirus deaths went up by 971 in the past 24 hours, taking the tally to 64,469, the health ministry said. The huge numbers have got authorities worried, especially with people in rural areas largely abandoning rules aimed at stopping the spread, officials say.

Kumar Sanjay Krishna, the chief secretary of Assam, one of the



worst-hit states, attributed the increasing cases to more testing, the opening of the economy and complacency. "People are not following precautionary steps and are violating the COVID protocols," he said. "From Monday onwards there shall be visible strict action taken against those who violate the norms of social distancing or found not wearing a face mask."

Hoping to avert more serious economic damage, the government is relaxing restrictions and has announced that urban metro trains can resume services from September 7. Also, up to 100 people will be al-

lowed to congregate for events including religious and political functions later in September. India's second-most industrialised state of Tamil Nadu said it would partially open public transport, allow shopping malls and places of worship to operate, abolish full shut-downs on Sundays and increase flights.

The government is also allowing states to let some school staff report to duty and has resisted pressure to delay exams slated to start Tuesday, with more than 2 million students aiming for admission to medical and engineering schools.

Maha eases rules for hotels, offices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 31: The Maharashtra government Monday lifted restriction on inter-district movement of persons and goods, and raised attendance in its offices as it announced a slew of relaxations while extending the general COVID-19-enforced lockdown in the state till September 30.

It said hotels and lodges will be allowed to operate at 100 per cent capacity from September 2, but schools, colleges, cinema halls and swimming pools will continue to

remain closed till September 30. Easing of restrictions came even as Maharashtra continues to register a record number of new coronavirus cases with no flattening of curve in sight in the state.

The government announced that there shall be no restriction on inter-district movement of persons and goods, including those for cross-land border trade under treaties with neighbouring countries from September 2.

No separate permission/approval/e-permit will be required for the vehicles and persons trav-

elling therein for such movements, the government said in its Mission Begin Again order that encapsulated "Unlock" norms. The government also allowed passenger movement by private bus/mini bus and other operators. The states Transport Commissioner will issue the standard operating procedure (SOP) for the same, the order said.

The government said that outdoor physical activities with no restrictions will be allowed, but made no mention of reopening of gyms and temples.

Govt to procure Pinaka rocket launchers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 31: The defence ministry Monday sealed a deal with two leading domestic defence majors to procure Pinaka rocket launchers for six Army regiments at a cost of Rs 2,580 crore, officials said.

They said the Pinaka regiments will be deployed along India's border with China and Pakistan to further enhance operational preparedness of the armed forces. The contract has been signed with Tata Power Company Ltd (TPCL) and engineering major Larsen & Toubro (L&T) while defence public sector undertaking Bharat Earth Movers Ltd (BEML) will also be part of the project.

The BEML will supply the vehicles on which the rocket launchers will be mounted. In a statement, the defence ministry said the six Pinaka regiments comprise 114 launchers with Automated Gun Aiming and Positioning System and 45 command posts. It said the missile regiments are planned to be operationalised by 2024. It said the weapons systems will have 70 per cent indigenous content.



Villagers carry their belongings as they move from a low lying area submerged in flood waters of the Ganga, following heavy rainfall in Prayagraj, Monday

PTI PHOTO

LeT revival plan busted in J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, August 31: Security forces have busted a plan of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) based in Pakistan to revive its network in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district and have arrested its three "overground workers", police said Monday.

These "overground workers" were in contact with their Pakistani handler (LeT) Mohd Qasim of Mahore who had exfiltrated to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in 2002. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Reasi, Rashmi Wazir said here.

The police and the Army have busted a major LeT revival plan in the Mahore area of Reasi district, and the three arrested "overground workers" include a government teacher, she said. The SSP said information was received through reliable sources at Police Station Mahore that some unknown persons in the area were in touch with LeT terrorists based in Pakistan to revive the LeT in Mahore with the intention to wage war against the country and disturb the sovereignty and integrity of India.

Based on this information, a



case was registered August 5, and a Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted to investigate it, she said. During the course of the investigation, with the help of technical data analysis support from the Army and intelligence units working in Mahore area and interrogation of suspects by the SIT, it emerged that Mohd Qasim, who is working for the LeT across the border, is the mastermind behind the module, the SSP said.

She said Qasim was trying to establish a network of "overground workers" so that the LeT could utilise it to recruit from Mahore and adjoining areas, provide logistics support and establish an LeT base to facilitate the crossing of terrorists via various routes, including but not limited to Rajouri belt-Mahore-Nikin Gali to Kashmir via Kulgam area.

IMBALANCE IN SEX RATIO

Selective abortion may cause 6.8 mn less girls born by 2030: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: An estimated 6.8 million fewer female births will be recorded across India by 2030 due to sex-selective abortions, according to a study that projects the highest deficits in the birth of girls will occur in Uttar Pradesh.

Researchers from King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), Saudi Arabia, and Universite de Paris, France, noted that there has been a reported imbalance in India in the sex ratio at birth (SRB) since the 1970s due to the emergence of prenatal sex se-

lection and the cultural preference for male babies.

Unlike other countries affected by such imbalances, India is unique in its regional diversity of sex ratio imbalance, they said. Previous projections of sex ratio at birth in India have been constructed at the national level or were based primarily on expert opinion rather than reproducible modelling.

In the latest study, published in the journal PLOS ONE, researchers projected the SRB in the largest 29 Indian States and Union Territories (UTs), which covered 98.4 per cent of the total population of India as



of the year 2011. Among the 21 Indian States or UTs with high qual-

ity birth data, 17 showed a positive effective of son preference on the SRB,

with the highest SRBs concentrated in the most northwestern States or UTs, the researchers said.

The team found that, in particular, the effect of son preference is statistically significant in nine States or UTs. "We project that the highest deficits in female births will occur in Uttar Pradesh, with a cumulative number of missing female births of 2 million from 2017 to 2030," the researchers said.

"For the whole of India, summing up the 29 state-level projections, the cumulative number of missing female births during 2017 to 2030 is projected to be 6.8," they wrote in the

study. The average annual number of missing female births between 2017 and 2025 is projected to be 469,000 per year and is projected to increase to 519,000 per year for the time period 2026 to 2030, according to the researchers.

The projects represent an essential input for population projection models in India, especially at the sub-national level, they added. In India, sex-selective abortions and prenatal sex discernment tests were banned in 1994 under the Pre-conception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act.

of the day quote

I want all young women in South Asia to know that leadership begins the day you are born. You are never too young or too old to be a leader

KAMALA HARRIS | DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE



I want the US President Trump to rest assured because the policy of bolstering the Japan-US alliance will remain unchanged

SHINZO ABE | JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER



The US attempts to control the world's governments while stealing their money and oil and gas wealth

HASSAN NASRALLAH | HEZBOLLAH LEADER



SHORT TAKES

France jails senior military officer

Paris: A senior French military officer stationed at a NATO base has been indicted and jailed on suspicion of spying for Russia, local media and sources said Sunday. The French army officer was stationed abroad, a judicial source said confirming details from Europe 1 radio. According to the report, the soldier was stationed on a NATO base in Italy and is suspected of espionage on behalf of Russia. The French government confirmed it was investigating a senior military officer over a "security breach".

3 Pak soldiers die in militant attack

Peshawar: Suspected militants attacked Pakistani troops amid a search operation in a former Taliban and al-Qaida stronghold in the northwest near the Afghan border, triggering a shootout that killed three soldiers, the army said Sunday. It said four soldiers also were wounded in the attack in South Waziristan, a district in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The army provided no further details, but South Waziristan had served as a militant base until recent years when Pakistan said its operations there had cleared the area of the Taliban.

1 killed, 5 hurt in Chicago shooting

Chicago: At least one person was killed and five others were injured in a shooting outside a restaurant in Chicago, local police said. The incident took place Sunday at around 1.50 p.m. in an outdoor tent at the Lumes Pancake House, reports Xinhua news agency. One of the people shot, who was the "targeted individual", died from injuries, Chicago Tribune quoted the city police as saying. The five others have been transported to local hospitals.

New oil fields found in Saudi

Riyadh: Saudi Energy Minister Abdulaziz bin Salman Al Saud announced Sunday the discovery of two oil and gas fields in the kingdom, the Saudi Press Agency reported. The two fields, Hadat Al-Hajrah gas field in the Al-Jawf region and Abraq Al-Talul oil field in the northern border region, were discovered by the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco). Saudi Aramco will work on assessing the quantities of oil, gas and condensate in the two fields, as well as digging more wells to determine their area and size, the minister said.



There are many more unpublished meetings between Israel and Arab and Muslim leaders

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER

WILDFIRE RAGES NEAR GREEK BRONZE AGE SITE OF MYCENAE

A wildfire raged near the ruins of the Bronze Age site of Mycenae in Greece Sunday, prompting the evacuation of visitors to the archeological site. The fire started near the tomb of Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae who was killed during the Trojan War



JAPAN'S RULING PARTY TO VOTE FOR NEW PM SEPT 14



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who is also the ruling Liberal Democratic Party leader, and ex-defence minister Shigeru Ishiba

The new party leader will become the country's next Prime Minister, due to the party's parliamentary majority, with four possible candidates vying for the position

REUTERS

Tokyo, August 31: Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party plans to hold a leadership vote September 14 to replace Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who is stepping down due to ill health, local media reported Monday.

The new party leader will become the country's next Prime Minister, due to the party's parliamentary majority, with four possible candidates vying for the position. Abe's successor will face a daunting list of economic, diplomatic and security issues, ranging from a stagnant economy hit by the coronavirus pandemic to China-US tensions.

In the race to succeed Abe as the next Prime Minister, former Defence Minister Shigeru Ishiba is the most popular choice among the public, media opinion polls showed.

But Ishiba, a vocal Abe critic, could face an uphill battle if he does declare his candidacy, with local media reporting Chief Cabinet

Secretary Yoshihide Suga was set to receive the backing of several major factions within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

Ishiba has about 34% of the public's support, more than double the 14% for Suga, the second-most popular choice, a weekend Kyodo News survey showed.

A Nikkei TV Tokyo poll showed Ishiba with 28% support, followed by current Defence Minister Taro Kono with 15%. Suga came in fourth place with 11%, the poll showed.

The surveys highlight a split between public opinion and internal LDP politics. Suga - a long-time lieutenant of Abe's in a key supporting role - will join the race to replace his boss with support expected from the faction led by LDP Secretary-General Toshihiro Nikai and other major factions, putting him in a favourable position.

Suga declined to comment on Monday when asked about the LDP leadership race at his regular news conference as the government's top spokesman.

2 killed in Abu Dhabi gas explosion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, August 31: A powerful gas explosion ripped through a restaurant in the UAE's capital here Monday, killing two persons, police said.

A number of people were injured in the explosion which took place at the fast food restaurant in a building on Rashid Bin Saeed Street, Khaleej Times reported.

"According to on-site investigations, the incident was caused by a misalignment in the gas container fittings following re-fuelling," the Abu Dhabi Media Office said.

Emergency response teams evacuated residents of the build-

ing and cordoned off the area, the Abu Dhabi Police said.

Two persons have been killed in the explosion, the Abu Dhabi Media office said in a statement on social media.

One of the deceased was present near the site while the other one was a passer-by who was hit by debris, it said.

The Rapid Intervention Teams of the Emergency and Public Safety Directorate are currently at the site to ensure public safety.

The sound from the explosion was "so loud that it shook the area", an eyewitness was quoted as saying by the report.

The entire restaurant and the ground floor of the building were gutted in the blast.

Uncertainty rules prez campaign's final stretch

Rarely have such dire variables loomed over the closing weeks of an election

ASSOCIATED PRESS

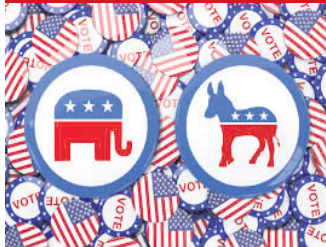
New York, August 31: Within President Donald Trump's campaign, some privately feared the worst heading into the national conventions.

They worried a strong showing by Democrat Joe Biden, combined with an underwhelming performance by Trump, would lock in the certainty of a blowout loss that would essentially end the election by September.

But as the candidates move beyond trouble-free conventions and into the final phase of the 2020 election season, both sides acknowledge the contest is tightening. And after months of running an almost entirely virtual campaign because of the pandemic, Biden has decided to launch a new phase of in-person events to help blunt any Trump gains.

"This campaign has always

US POLLS 2020



known that it's going to be a close race, it's going to be a tough race," Biden's senior adviser Anita Dunn said, noting that no Democratic presidential candidate since 1964 has earned more than 52.9% of the vote.

She added: "It's a polarised nation and we expect this kind of tightening."

That leaves Democrats and Republicans preparing for a 64-day sprint to the finish that is widely expected to be one of the most tur-

bulent and chaotic periods in modern American history.

Each side cast the other as an existential threat to America's future as they offered voters starkly different versions of reality over the last two weeks of carefully scripted conventions.

Democrats attacked Trump as an incompetent racist with autocratic tendencies who is failing to protect the nation from the pandemic as he actively undermines democracy.

Republicans largely ignored the pandemic while attacking Biden as a senile lifetime politician controlled by his party's far-Left wing and incapable of protecting suburban voters from mobs of protesters.

Rarely have such dire variables loomed over the closing weeks of an election. A pandemic that has already killed 180,000 Americans shows little sign of slowing. A scuf-

fling economy has pushed 28 million onto the unemployment rolls with tens of thousands of businesses feared permanently closed. Continued police violence against unarmed Black people has sparked sweeping civil rights protests and new incidents of protest-related violence on the streets.

There are the natural disasters: A hurricane pummeled the Gulf Coast last week, massive forest fires are burning California, and powerful derecho winds slammed Iowa's farming industry.

And what worries government watchdogs the most: Trump is openly undermining the integrity of the election by raising unfounded concerns about voting by mail to avoid long waits at polling places during the pandemic.

Among the many crises shaping the fall campaign, racial tensions have emerged as a critical factor that could decide Trump's fate.

Lebanese Prez calls for creation of 'secular state'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beirut, August 31: Lebanese President Michel Aoun has called for the formation of a "secular state" in an effort to rescue the country from confessionalism.

Confessionalism refers to a system of government that is a legally recognised mix of religion and politics. "There is a need to develop, modify, and change the system...call it the way you like; but most certainly, Lebanon needs a new conception in running its affairs, based on citizenry and on the secularism of the state," Xinhua news agency quoted Aoun as saying in a televised speech Sunday.

Lebanon is governed under the National Pact, which is an unwritten agreement that laid the foundation of the country as a multi-confessional state between the Shia Muslim, Sunni Muslim, and Maronite Christian leaderships.

According to this pact, the President should always be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim and the Parliament Speaker a Shia Muslim.

PIO Pritam Singh is Oppn leader of S'pore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, August 31: Pritam Singh, Singapore's Indian-origin politician scripted history Monday when Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the city-state's first Leader of the Opposition.

Singh's Workers' Party won 10 parliamentary seats out of the 93 it contested in the July 10 General Election, making it the biggest opposition presence in Singapore's parliamentary history. As the House began proceedings on Monday, one of the first orders of business was a ministerial statement by the Leader of the House Indranee Rajah on formally recognising Singh, 43, as the country's first Opposition leader.



Visitors watch fireworks at Toshimaen amusement park which will close 94 years after it first opened with part of the site be turned into a new Harry Potter theme park in 2023, in Tokyo, Japan

REUTERS PHOTO

UK political giants neck and neck in latest poll

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, August 31: The UK's two big political parties, the ruling Conservatives and the main opposition Labour, are neck and neck for the first time in over a year in a new opinion poll.

The poll issued Sunday by Opinion for the Observer newspaper, gave both Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives and the Labour 40 points each, reports Xinhua news agency.

This meant that a lead of 26 points at its peak for Johnson has been wiped out.

Political commentators in London believe the result will send shockwaves through Westminster as politicians prepare to return to the House of Commons Tuesday after their lengthy summer recess. On the Opposition benches however, the result will be welcomed by Labour MPs, headed by Keir Starmer, who



KEIR STARMER



BORIS JOHNSON

replaced former party leader Jeremy Corbyn earlier this year.

Opinium's Adam Drummond said: "This is the first time Labour have drawn level since July 2019 when both main parties were in freefall and losing votes to the Brexit Party and the Liberal Democrats."

Since Johnson became Prime Minister, the Conservatives "typically had a double digit lead, peaking in March/April this year when

they were seen to be handling the pandemic and lockdown fairly well while Labour changed leader".

"In the five months since that peak, the lead has gradually declined from 26 per cent to 0 per cent now." As well as steering the country through the pandemic, Johnson faces a tough potentially make-or-break month September on Brexit negotiations with the European Union (EU).

COVID-19 CURE

Xinjiang govt forces unproven medicine on people

In what experts call a breach of medical ethics, some residents are being coerced into swallowing traditional Chinese medicine



This August 2020, photo provided by a Uighur under quarantine shows a bottle of unidentified traditional Chinese medicine in Urumqi, China

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, August 31: When police arrested the middle-aged Uighur woman at the height of China's coronavirus outbreak, she was crammed into a cell with dozens of other women in a detention centre.

There, she said, she was forced to drink a medicine that made her feel weak and nauseous, guards watching as she gulped. She and the others also had to strip naked once a week and cover their faces as guards hosed them and their cells down with disinfectant "like firemen," she said.

"It was scalding," recounted the woman by phone from Xinjiang,

declining to be named out of fear of retribution. "My hands were ruined, my skin was peeling." The government in China's far northwest Xinjiang region is resorting to draconian measures to combat the coronavirus, including physically locking residents in homes, imposing quarantines of more than 40 days and arresting those who do not comply.

Furthermore, in what experts call a breach of medical ethics, some residents are being coerced into swallowing traditional Chinese medicine, according to government notices, social media posts and interviews with three people in quarantine in Xinjiang. There is a lack of rigorous clinical

data showing traditional Chinese medicine works against the virus, and one of the herbal remedies used in Xinjiang, Qingfei Paidu, includes ingredients banned in Germany, Switzerland, the US and other countries for high levels of toxins and carcinogens.

The latest grueling lockdown, now in its 45th day, comes in response to 826 cases reported in Xinjiang since mid-July, China's largest caseload since the initial outbreak. But the Xinjiang lockdown is especially striking because of its severity, and because there hasn't been a single new case of local transmission in over a week.

Harsh lockdowns have been imposed elsewhere in China, most

notably in Wuhan in Hubei province, where the virus was first detected. But though Wuhan grappled with over 50,000 cases and Hubei with 68,000 in all, many more than in Xinjiang, residents there weren't forced to take traditional medicine and were generally allowed outdoors within their compounds for exercise or grocery deliveries.

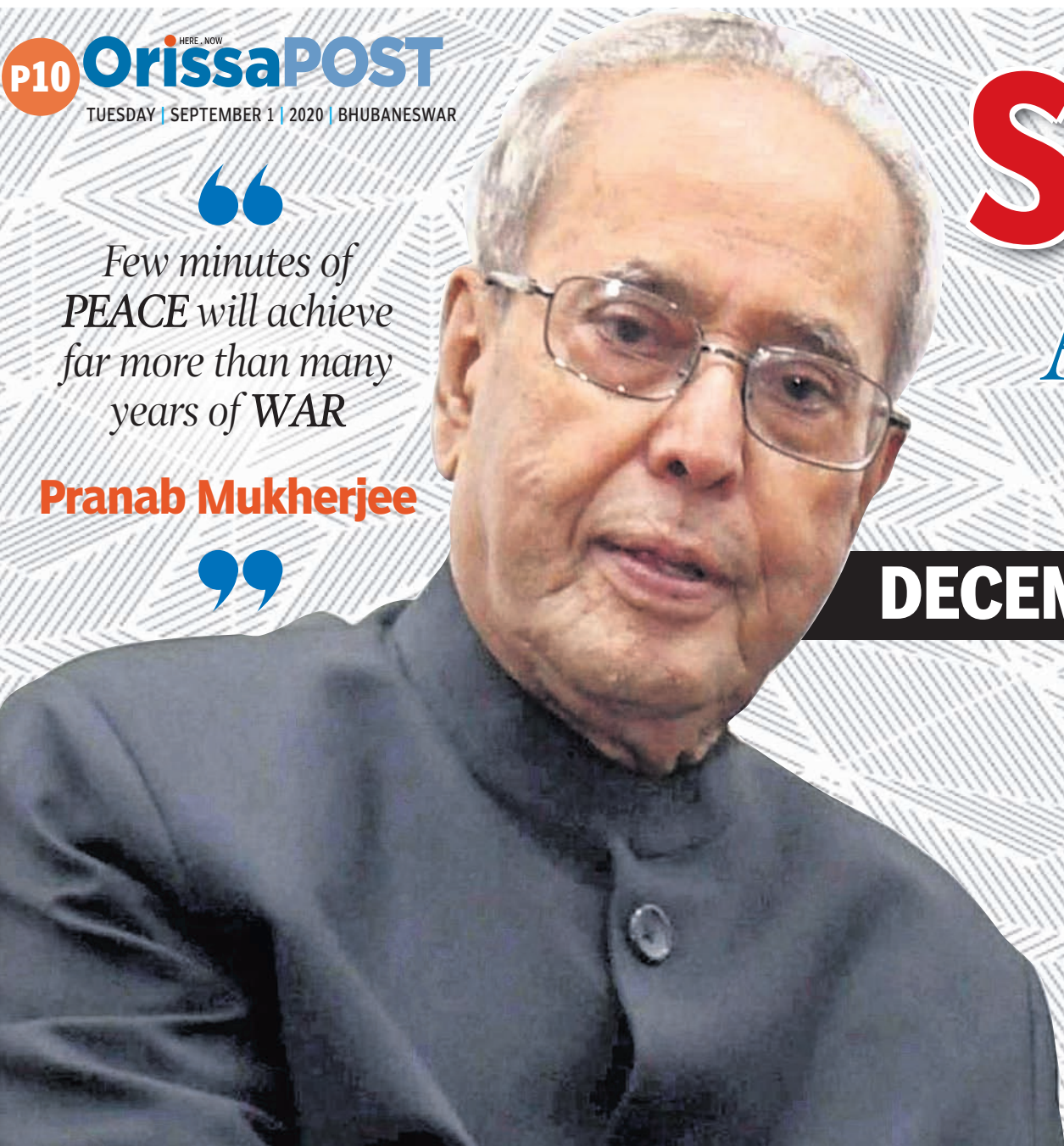
The response to an outbreak of more than 300 cases in Beijing in early June was milder still, with a few select neighbourhoods locked down for a few weeks. In contrast, more than half of Xinjiang's 25 million people are under a lockdown that extends hundreds of miles from the centre of the out-

break in the capital, Urumqi.

Even as Wuhan and the rest of China have mostly returned to ordinary life, Xinjiang's lockdown is backed by a vast surveillance apparatus that has turned the region into a digital police state. Over the past three years, Xinjiang authorities have swept a million or more Uighurs, Kazakhs and other ethnic minorities into various forms of detention, including extrajudicial internment camps, under a widespread security crackdown.

Authorities say the measures taken are for the well-being of all residents, though they haven't commented on why they are harsher than those taken elsewhere.

“
Few minutes of
PEACE will achieve
far more than many
years of WAR
Pranab Mukherjee
”



STATESMAN

An able administrator who was loved by all

DECEMBER 11, 1935 - AUGUST 31, 2020

A WALKING ENCYCLOPAEDIA

Pranab Mukherjee was considered a walking encyclopaedia on virtually everything related to politics and governance which made it difficult for any bureaucrat to hoodwink or trip him. A former secretary in the government who worked under him when Mukherjee was Foreign Minister had remarked: “He has a photographic memory for the fine print and remembers negotiating details and their articles and clauses like nobody can. So whatever you tell him, he will tell you more about it.”

Sad to hear that former President Shri Pranab Mukherjee is no more. His demise is passing of an era. A colossus in public life, he served Mother India with the spirit of a sage. The nation mourns losing one of its worthiest sons. Condolences to his family, friends & all citizens

RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT



India grieves the passing away of Bharat Ratna Shri Pranab Mukherjee. He has left an indelible mark on the development trajectory of our nation. A scholar par excellence, a towering statesman, he was admired across the political spectrum and by all sections of society

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

Deeply saddened to know about the demise of former President Pranab Mukherjee. Pranab Da was a prolific reader, powerful orator, scholar & had an unparalleled experience in governance. He will always be remembered for his exceptional ability to forge consensus on national issues

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER OF ODISHA



With great sadness, the nation receives the news of the unfortunate demise of our former President Shri Pranab Mukherjee. I join the country in paying homage to him. My deepest condolences to the bereaved family and friends

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

Pranab Mukherjee was a guide for Sangh and was affectionate towards the organisation and his passing away is irreparable loss to the RSS. Mukherjee was an able administrator who kept national interest supreme

MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF



Pranab da had been such an integral and prominent part of national life, the Congress party and the central government for over five decades, it is hard to imagine how we can do without his wisdom, experience, sage advice and deep understanding of so many subjects

SONIA GANDHI | INTERIM CONGRESS CHIEF

Pranab Da's life will always be cherished for his impeccable service and indelible contribution to our motherland. His demise has left a huge void in Indian polity. My sincerest condolences are with his family and followers on this irreparable loss

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER



7-DAY MOURNING

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Monday announced a seven-day state mourning in memory of former President Pranab Mukherjee who passed away here this evening. As a mark of respect to the departed dignitary, seven days' state mourning will be observed throughout India from August 31 to September 6, both days inclusive, the MHA said in a statement. "During the period of state mourning, the National Flag will fly at half-mast on all buildings throughout India, where it is flown regularly and there will be no official entertainment." The date, time and venue of the state funeral will be intimated later, the ministry added. Mukherjee passed away Monday evening at Army's Research and Referral Hospital. He was 84. The elder statesman and one of the country's most respected politicians, who tested positive for coronavirus, had been in coma after a brain surgery earlier this month.

‘Blessed to have been born as your daughter’



Former President Pranab Mukherjee's daughter Sharmistha Mukherjee on Monday said that her father led a full and meaningful life in service of the nation and people. In a tweet, an emotional Sharmistha said, "I bow to all. Baba, taking the liberty to quote from your favourite poet to say your final goodbye to all. You have led a full, meaningful life in service of the nation, in service of our people. I feel blessed to have been born as your daughter." She also attached a photograph of the former President.

A politician for all seasons

Born December 11, 1935, Pranab Mukherjee, fondly called Pranab da by close associates, served as the 13th President of India from 2012 to 2017. In a political career spanning five decades, Mukherjee has been a senior leader of the Indian National Congress and occupied several ministerial portfolios at the Centre.

Prior to his election as President, Mukherjee was Union Finance Minister from 2009 to 2012. He was awarded India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna in 2019. Pranab was born in a Bengali family in Mirati, a village in the Bengal Presidency of British India (now in Birbhum district, West Bengal, India). His father, Kamada Kinkar Mukherjee was active in the Indian independence movement and was a member of West Bengal Legislative Council between 1952 and 1964 as a representative of the Indian National Congress and was the member of AICC. His mother was Rajlakshmi Mukherjee. He attended the Suri Vidyasagar College in Suri (Birbhum) and subsequently earned MA degree in Political Science & History and LL.B. degree – both from University of Calcutta. He was an upper-division Clerk in the Office of Deputy Accountant-General (Post and Telegraph) in Calcutta. In 1963, he became Lecturer of Political Science at Vidyannagar College,

Kolkata and also worked as a Journalist with the Dasher Dak before entering politics.

Mukherjee got his break in politics in 1969 when the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi helped him to get elected to the Rajya Sabha on a Congress ticket. Following a meteoric rise, he became one of Gandhi's most trusted lieutenants and a minister in her Cabinet in 1973. During the controversial Emergency (1975-77), he was accused of committing gross excesses. Mukherjee's service in a number of ministerial capacities culminated in his first stint as Finance Minister of India in 1982-84. He was also the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha from 1980 to 1985. However, Mukherjee was sidelined from the Congress during the premiership of Rajiv Gandhi. Mukherjee lost out in the ensuing power struggle. He formed his own party, the Rashtriya Samajwadi Congress, which merged with the Congress in 1989 after reaching a consensus with Rajiv Gandhi. After Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991, Mukherjee's political career revived when Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao appointed him Planning Commission head in 1991 and Foreign Minister in 1995. Soon, as an elder statesman of the Congress, Mukherjee was the principal architect of Sonia Gandhi's ascension to the party's presidency in 1998.

When the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) came into power in 2004, Mukherjee won a Lok Sabha seat for the first time. Since then until his resignation in 2012, Mukherjee was practically number-two in Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's government. He held a number of key Cabinet portfolios – Defence (2004-06), External Affairs (2006-09) and Finance (2009-12) – apart from heading several Groups of Ministers (GoMs) and being Leader of the House in the Lok Sabha. After securing the UPA's nomination for the country's presidency in July 2012, Mukherjee comfortably defeated PA Sangma in the race to Rashtrapati Bhavan, winning 70 per cent of the electoral-college vote. In 2017, Mukherjee decided not to run for re-election and to retire from politics after leaving the presidency due to "health complications relating to old age". His term expired July 25, 2017

Pranab Mukherjee married Suvra Mukherjee July 13, 1957.

The couple had two sons and a daughter. Suvra died August 18, 2015, aged 74, of heart failure while Mukherjee was still in office. On August 10, 2020, Mukherjee announced on Twitter that he tested positive for COVID-19 prior to his surgery to remove a brain clot. He was on ventilator support and in a very critical condition at the Army's R&R hospital in Delhi.



In this September 19, 2004 file photo Mukherjee is seen with the then PM Manmohan Singh and Congress President Sonia Gandhi



Pranab Mukherjee receiving the Bharat Ratna - the country's highest civilian award from President Ram Nath Kovind (File Photo)



PM Narendra Modi with late former President Pranab Mukherjee (File Photo)

PRANAB: MAN WHO COULD NEVER BE PM

ANITA SALUJA

Though generally people tend to rebuke politicians, there are some exceptional ones, whom every party would love to have them on their side. One such politician was Pranab Mukherjee, who was known, not for his ideology as such, but for his intellect, his wisdom, his knowledge and his forthright behaviour. And of course, he was not a saint but a politician to the core, highly ambitious, who aspired to lead the nation, but could only get his entry into the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Like other leaders, he, too, obviously had dreams. He had a dream of becoming the Prime Minister and he nearly got the opportunity twice, but on both occasions, he missed the Bus, as luck was not on his side. After the assassination of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, there was a proposal to make him the Interim Prime Minister, but due to the circumstances at that time, everyone, including A B A Ghani Khan

Choudhary, Narasimha Rao, P Shiv Shankar and he, himself, felt that by coronating him as the Interim Prime Minister, things would go out of hand in a sensitive situation. All these Congress Parliamentary Board Members at that time, wanted to appoint Rajiv Gandhi as Indira Gandhi's successor and they did it that very same evening when Indira Gandhi died. Later, in 2004, Sonia Gandhi chose Manmohan Singh, instead of him, as her Prime Minister, though he had fought the elections from West Bengal and had won.

Though Pranab Mukherjee never made it to the top, he was always considered indispensable in the party. He was the trouble-shooter, who came to the rescue of the party when required. He was the Number Two in Manmohan Singh's Cabinet, chairing all the Committees and advising both the Government and the party, on almost all the issues & subjects, right from Finance to Commerce, Industry and Home, etc. Whenever the Congress landed in any crisis, he was there to rescue the party. During the Lok Pal crisis,

it was he who negotiated with the Anna Hazare team and the BJP to resolve the issue. Similarly, he played the crucial role in the signing of the India, US Civil Nuclear Agreement, even though India had not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Congress President Sonia Gandhi chose Manmohan Singh as her Prime Minister, instead of him, as she was scared that Pranab Mukherjee would sideline her and become too big for his boots. The very fact that he chose to contest Lok Sabha elections in 2014 from Jangipur in West Bengal reflected his desire to lead the nation, which undoubtedly proved disastrous for him. Sonia Gandhi was impressed by Manmohan Singh instead, who showed no signs of ambition, by refusing to contest the elections.

Pranab Mukherjee, who was poles apart from Manmohan Singh, shared several similarities with P V Narasimha Rao and both were friends. Unlike Manmohan Singh, Pranab Mukherjee would never have kowtowed to Congress President Sonia Gandhi and indeed



would have run the government on his own terms. Pranab Mukherjee had grown in the Congress and had worked closely with Indira Gandhi, the reason why he knew the in-and-out of the party. If you did happen to meet the former President once, you would come out as a more wiser & knowledgeable person. This applied not only to the scribes, bureaucrats, but all the politicians from different regions and parties.

It was during such meetings, when Pranab Mukherjee was the President that Prime Minister Narendra Modi became closer to him. On every subject relating to

India or abroad, Mukherjee was a human encyclopaedia. He would enrich the conversation and take it to the next level, which obviously anyone would enjoy.

Prime Minister Modi never missed to call on "Dada" after his visits abroad. It was during these meetings that they developed a bond between them. It is very rare that a Ruling Establishment gives the Highest Civilian Award, Bharat Ratna, to be precise, to an Opposition leader. Pranab Mukherjee was awarded the Bharat Ratna in 2019, much to the surprise of the Congressmen, who felt unhappy

that he did not reject the invite to visit the RSS headquarters.

Pranab Mukherjee was unsure whether Sonia Gandhi would nominate him as the Presidential candidate, but in the absence of any other senior leader to match his stature, he became the obvious choice. He was thrilled to get elected easily but after a few months, he was bored, as he missed the hurly-burly of politics. As President, he, however, did his best to tour India extensively, visiting different Universities, in his capacity of being the Chancellor & guiding the youth.

As a journalist, I often visited Rashtrapati Bhawan and was astounded to see streams of Congress leaders coming to meet him. They would come to seek his advice on difficult issues, as he was always there to give his advice.

Being impressed by his knowledge, virtually on all the subjects, I often used to persuade him to write his memoirs. He, too, was impressed with the idea and once told me that his friend & colleague PV Narasimha Rao also advised him to write his biography as people

would learn a lot from his experiences. "I told him that large parts of my diaries were destroyed when rain water flooded my house. 'Then what? It's all there in your mind, you can write them again,' Narasimha Rao told me," he said. It was due to the persuasion of Narasimha Rao that he finally penned down his memoirs, in three volumes: *The Dramatic Decade: The Indira Gandhi Years; The Turbulent Years: 1980-1996; and The Coalition Years: 1996-2012*.

During his long career of five decades, he served the Indian government in various capacities – Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Commerce Minister, Finance Minister, Defence Minister and Minister of External Affairs. For the Congress Party, he was one of the most important figures. He served as the key leader when Congress was out of power.

However, he couldn't become the Prime Minister, as he never was in the good books of Congress President Sonia Gandhi neither could he really become a people's person, ever.

of the day quote

Now that we fully understand Centre's intentions on GST Compensation we have no choice other than to reject them lock, stock and barrel. No self-reliant state can accept them. No more surrender of states' rights. GST Compensation is our constitutional right



THOMAS ISAAC | FM, KERALA

India is the key focus country for Asus and in the consumer PC segment, we are already among the top players in the market. We want to introduce the same amount of consumer centricity for businesses in India



DINESH SHARMA | BUSINESS HEAD, ASUS

The commercialisation of our insulin glargine in the US represents another milestone achievement for Biocon in making insulin-based therapy increasingly accessible for people with diabetes globally



KIRAN MAZUMDAR-SHAW | EXEC. CHAIRPERSON, BIOCON

SHORT TAKES

LIC sells record 2.19 cr policies

New Delhi: Insurance behemoth Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) sold 2.19 crore policies in FY 2019-20, the maximum in the last six years, despite disruptions caused by COVID-19 towards the fiscal-end. During 2019-20, LIC registered a growth of 25.17% in its 'New Business' in terms of first year premium. Its total first year premium amounted to Rs 1.78 Lakh crore at the end of March 31, 2020, capturing 68.74% of market share, the insurer said in a statement.

Pinaki becomes NIPFP director

New Delhi: Eminent economist Pinaki Chakraborty will take charge as the director of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) from October 15, the economic think-tank said Monday. Chakraborty will replace Rathin Roy, a former member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister. Roy had quit as NIPFP director in June. Chakraborty is a professor at NIPFP but currently on leave and serving as Chief - Social Policy, Unicef State Office for Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

RAHI supports FPOs in Odisha

New Delhi: NGO Rise Against Hunger India (RAHI) Monday said it has launched a project to create an end-to-end value chain for millet farmers in Bargarh district, Odisha and is supporting five Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). Bangalore-based RAHI is helping 800 farmers under these five FPOs to improve yield through agri-tools, equipment and other inputs, it said.

Sebi refuses to extend deadline

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi has refused to extend the September 1 deadline to implement the new rules on margin pledge, stock brokers' association ANMI said Monday. The new mechanism is aimed at bringing transparency and preventing brokerages from misusing clients' securities. The decision was taken after Sebi's meeting with stock brokers' association, depositories and clearing corporations.

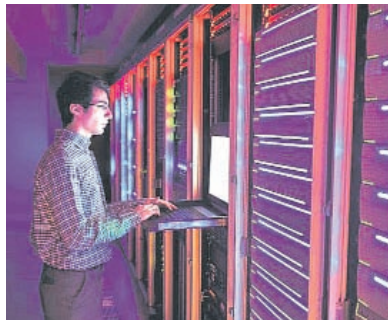


We request Centre to intervene and introduce a price monitoring and regulation mechanism for sale of steel by integrated steel producers, to ensure that there is no unreasonable hike in domestic steel prices

RK SHARMA | SECY. GENERAL, FIMI

'MUMBAI HOME TO HIGHEST DATA CENTRES'

Country's financial capital Mumbai saw the highest capacity addition on data centres in the January-June period this year and now accounts for 42% of the overall installed capacity in India, finds report



RBI announces steps to ease pressure on liquidity

AGENCIES

Mumbai, August 31: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monday announced a host of steps, including term repo operations totalling ₹1 lakh crore in mid-September to ease pressure on the liquidity and maintain congenial financial conditions with a view to ensuring sustainable recovery of economic growth.

"The RBI stands ready to conduct market operations as required through a variety of instruments so as to ensure orderly market functioning," the central bank said in a statement adding that recently market sentiment has been impacted by concerns relating to the inflation outlook and the fiscal situation amidst global developments that have



firmed up yields abroad.

As part of the measures to 'foster orderly market conditions', the RBI will conduct term repo operations for an aggregate amount of ₹1,00,000 crore at floating rates (at the prevailing repo rate) in the middle of September to assuage pressures

As part of the measures to 'foster orderly market conditions', the RBI will conduct term repo operations for an aggregate amount of ₹1,00,000 crore

on the market on account of advance tax outflows.

The RBI said that in order to reduce the cost of funds, banks that had availed of funds under long-term repo operations (LTROs) may exercise an option of reversing these transactions before maturity.

"Thus, the banks may reduce their interest liability by returning funds taken at the repo rate prevailing at that time (5.15%) and availing funds at the current repo rate of 4%. Details are being notified separately," it said. The last date for paying the second instalment of advance tax is September 15.

Further, the RBI will conduct additional special open market operation involving the simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities for an aggregate amount of ₹20,000 crore in two tranches of ₹10,000 crore each. The auctions would be conducted September 10, 2020, and September 17, 2020.

The RBI remains committed to conducting further such operations as warranted by market conditions, the central bank said.

As part of the measures, the RBI has also decided to allow banks to hold fresh acquisitions of statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) securities acquired from September 1, 2020, under Held-To-Maturity (HTM) up to an overall limit of 22% of net demand and time liabilities (NDTL) up to March 31, 2021 which shall be reviewed thereafter, it said.

Currently banks are required to maintain 18 per cent of their reserves in SLR securities. The extant limit for investments that can be held in HTM category is 25% of total investment. Banks are allowed to exceed this limit provided the excess is invested in SLR securities within an overall limit of 19.5% of NDTL. SLR securities held in HTM category by major banks amount to around 17.3% of NDTL at present.

Economy shrinks record 23.9% in June quarter

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 31: India's GDP shrank by the steepest ever 23.9% in the April-June period as the coronavirus lockdowns battered an already slowing economy, official data showed Monday.

Agriculture was the only outlier as all other sectors, including manufacturing, construction and services, suffered steep declines.

India's economy had grown by 5.2% in the same quarter of last fiscal, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

The government had imposed a nationwide lockdown from March 25, 2020 to curb the spread of COVID-19 infections which adversely impacted all sectors of the economy.

According to the data, gross value added (GVA) growth in the manufacturing sector contracted by 39.3% in the first quarter of 2020-21, from 3% expansion a year ago.

However, farm sector GVA grew at 3.4%, compared to 3% in the corresponding period of 2019-20. Construction sector GVA contracted by a whopping 50.3% from 5.2% expansion earlier. Mining sector output declined at 23.3%, as against a growth of 4.7% a year ago.

Electricity gas, water supply and other utility services segment too shrank by 7% in the first quarter of 2020-21, against 8.8% growth a year ago.

Similarly, trade, hotel, transport,



COVID FREEFALL

AGRICULTURE WAS THE ONLY OUTLIER AS ALL OTHER SECTORS, INCLUDING MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND SERVICES, SUFFERED STEEP DECLINES

ACCORDING TO THE DATA, THE GVA GROWTH IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR CONTRACTED BY 39.3% IN Q1 OF 2020-21

communication and services related to broadcasting declined 47% in the first quarter from 3.5% growth earlier. Financial, real estate and professional services fell by 5.3 per cent in Q1 FY21 from 6% growth in same period last fiscal.

Public administration, defence and other services too saw a decline of 10.3 per cent during the quarter under review, from 7.7 per cent growth a year earlier.

"GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in Q1 of 2020-21 is estimated at ₹26.90 lakh crore, as against ₹35.35 lakh crore in Q1 of 2019-20, showing a contraction of 23.9 percent as compared to 5.2 percent growth in Q1 2019-20," the NSO said in a statement. "With a view to contain spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, restrictions were imposed on the economic activities not deemed essential, as also on the movement of people from 25 March, 2020. "Though the restrictions have been gradually lifted, there has been an impact on the economic activities as well as on the data collection mechanisms," it added.

It also said the timelines for filing statutory returns were extended by most regulatory bodies. "In these circumstances, the usual data sources were substituted by alternatives like GST, interactions with professional bodies etc. and which were clearly limited," it said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: The Union Government's fiscal deficit overshoot the budget target for the current financial year within four months (April-July), mainly on account of the impact of lockdown on revenue collections.

According to the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), fiscal deficit during April-July was at 103.1% of the annual target or at ₹8,21,349 crore.

It stood at 77.8% of the annual target during the corresponding period of last fiscal. Fiscal deficit, which refers to the difference between expenditure and revenue, had overshoot the annual target in October last year.

The government had pegged the fiscal deficit for 2020-21 at ₹7.96 lakh crore or 3.5% of the GDP in the budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in February.

These figures, however, have to be revised significantly in view of the economic disruptions created by the outbreak of coronavirus.

The government had imposed a nationwide lockdown from March 25 to prevent the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. The economy was opened up gradually after the lockdown.

Fiscal deficit had soared to a



seven-year high of 4.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019-20, mainly on account of poor revenue realisation, which dipped further towards the end of March because of lockdown.

As per the CGA data, government's revenue receipts stood at ₹2,27,402 crore or 11.3% of the Budget Estimates (BE). During the same period of last fiscal, the realisation was at 19.5% of the BE.

Tax revenue stood at ₹2,02,788 crore or 12.4% of BE during the first four months of the fiscal. During the corresponding period of the last fiscal, the tax revenue was at 20.5% of BE.

The government's total receipts were at 10.4 per cent of BE or ₹2,32,860 crore. In the Budget, the government had estimated the total receipts for the fiscal at ₹22.45 lakh crore. The government's total expenditure stood at ₹10,54,209 crore or 34.7% of BE at the end of July. During the same period of last fiscal, the total expenditure was at 34% of BE.

BIZ BUZZ

Adani Group to pick 74% stake in MIAL



New Delhi: Billionaire Gautam Adani's Adani Group Monday said it has reached an agreement to acquire GVK Group's shareholding and control of Mumbai Airport. Adani Airport Holdings has "entered into an agreement to acquire the debt of GVK Airport Developers," Adani Enterprise said in a regulatory filing. GVK Group holds 50.50% equity stake in Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL). The debt will be converted into equity. The two firms did not give further financial details of the deal. "The Adani Group will also take steps to complete the acquisition of a 23.5% equity stake from ACSA (Airports Company of South Africa) and Bidvest in MIAL for which it has obtained Competition Commission of India's approval," it added.

SBI donates barricades

Bhubaneswar: State Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Circle donated Monday 15 barricades to Commissionerate Police, Bhubaneswar. The Chief General Manager of State Bank of India (SBI), Bhubaneswar Circle Ruma Dey handed over the barricades to KK Panigrahi, Addl DCP (Traffic), Bhubaneswar in the presence of CLN Charyulu, General Manager NW-1, Bejoy Kumar Kuzur, General Manager, NW-2, Anup Kumar Sinha, DGM & CDO, Prakash Kumar Mishra, DGM, DBT, and Swastik Kumar Panda, ACP (Traffic), Bhubaneswar. The handing over function was organised following the guidelines issued by Govt. for Covid-19.



CNG penetration to boost state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is the future of the country and substitute for petrol and diesel. In a bid to boost CNG penetration and make available across Odisha, state-owned GAIL targets to set up CNG stations in 300 places in the state.

Twin-cities will be the major target in the CNG penetration drive. According to sources, GAIL's 40 CNG stations in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack are in process of construction. Also, 30 more CNG stations are also lined up near areas of twin-cities. Sources said that CNG stations will be available in approximately 300 places in Odisha

as part of the future road map.

Oil industry firms like IOCL, BPCL and HPCL have also taken measures to set up CNG stations in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. According to a report, there are 11 existing CNG stations in the twin cities and Puri. There are four CNG stations in Cuttack, six in Bhubaneswar and one in Puri. IOCL has set up four stations, BPCL five and HPCL two.

There are 5,000 CNG vehicles running across the twin cities. An IOCL official said that about 90 to 95% of total CNG consumption is consumed by autos and very minimal that is 4 to 6% by cars and rest by two-wheelers. CNG is being supplied from Kakinada and Dahej.

Future Group acquisition doubles RIL's retail footprint

THE DEAL BRINGS POTENTIAL SYNERGIES FROM THE INCREASED GEOGRAPHIC PRESENCE, IMPROVING SOURCING EFFICIENCIES AND COST RATIONALISATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: Reliance Industries Ltd's (RIL) acquisition of debt-strapped Future Group will almost double the footprint of its retail business, which now is valued at up to \$68 billion, analysts said.

The oil-to-telecom conglomerate on Saturday announced the acquisition of Future's retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing units for ₹24,713 crore. The deal terms entail a merger of five listed units of Future Group into Future Enterprises Ltd (FEL).

Reliance Retail has also proposed

to invest ₹1,200 crore in FEL preferential equity (6.09% of post-merger equity of FEL) and ₹1,600 crore in preferential warrants (option to acquire further 7.05%).

The deal increases the retail store footprint of Reliance Retail Ltd, a unit of RIL, from current 28.7 million square feet to 52.5 million sq ft, consolidating its pole position, analysts said.

While UBS said the deal would require approvals from SEBI, CCI and NCLT in addition to no objection from creditors and minority shareholders, JP Morgan said it remains to be seen if Reliance would



look to re-brand the existing Future group stores under own formats.

The deal brings potential synergies from the increased geographic presence, improving sourcing efficiencies and cost rationalisation,

UBS said raising its valuation of Reliance Retail from \$64 billion to \$68 billion.

HSBC said the acquisition implies a clean acquisition of Future Retail, Future Lifestyle Fashions

Ltd (FLFL) and Future Supply Chain Solutions Ltd (FSCSL). In addition, it will acquire a 13.1 per cent shareholding in the remaining of FEL.

"The deal will allow Reliance Retail to almost double its retail area under operation and increase the store count by 15%," it said.

Goldman Sachs said the proposed transaction could solidify Reliance Retail's market leader positioning in organised retail across categories, bolster warehousing and logistics enabling faster growth for its online offering JioMart and improve competitive positioning versus foreign

retailers like Walmart and Amazon.

Motilal Oswal said the deal holds very high strategic interest to RIL as it would aid in enhancing footprint, offer a good legacy franchise and help build competitive strength.

Credit Suisse said EBITDA per square feet of the acquired portfolio is less than one-third of that of Reliance Retail and Avenue Supermarts.

"This is due to both lower revenue per sq ft and higher cost structure (both rent and employee cost). In our view, the synergies are higher on the revenue front," it said.

‘FORTUNE TELLER’ KULDEEP

What I said turned out true a lot of times, including my second hat-trick, reveals the Indian chinaman bowler

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, August 31: Quite like England’s Jofra Archer, Kuldeep Yadav, the chinaman bowler with loads of variations, also has the ability to predict future events, with his second ODI hat-trick being one of them. That is what the India spinner says.

Kuldeep is the only bowler from the country to have taken two ODI hat-tricks. He took his first hat-trick against Australia at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata in 2017, and two years later, repeated the feat against the West Indies.

“For the second hat-trick, you might not believe me, but I had told my mom that day that I would take a hat-trick. A lot of times, what I said turned out true.

“I guess it was just a random moment when we were batting against the Windies that I just realised I would take a hat-trick. Things panned out just the way I had planned,” Kuldeep was quoted as saying by IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR).

Besides his fast bowling, Archer’s prophecies have also earned him some following in recent years. Going back to his first hat-trick, Kuldeep said MS Dhoni helped him when he sought the veteran’s advice for the third ball.

“I got my first wicket of Matthew Wade and then in the next ball I plucked Ashton Agar. For the third ball, I asked Mahi bhai what to bowl. When you have so many variations, you get confused. He just let me do whatever I felt was right but suggested that I kept it to the stumps,” Kuldeep said.

“I spoke to Virat bhai and asked him if I could bowl from the other end. He said once Chahal’s spell was over, I could bowl from that



end. I struck a very good rhythm and started bowling in the spot.”

The 25-year, who has flummoxed the best of batsmen with his accuracy and variations, added, “I kept a slip and gully in place. Luckily I bowled a good ball and got the edge.

“Getting a hat-trick at Eden Garden, that too in the first year of international cricket, is a big thing and this was one of the biggest moments of my life.”

Talking about his expectations from the IPL, starting September 19 in the UAE, Kuldeep said that KKR can win the title with the right combinations.

“I had a strong feeling last year that we would win. Even in 2018, we were playing great cricket and I was sure we would win the title,” said the Indian bowler.

“I remember the match we lost against Sunrisers Hyderabad (in

qualifier 2). I was out of the ground because my spell was over. They were on 125 and I thought they would not go beyond 145. But Rashid Khan came into the middle and changed the game.

“We were just one step away from entering the final. It was a heart-breaking moment when we lost the match. If we can strike a good combination, we can certainly win it this year.”

India teen wins title at Skalicky Chess Festival

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 31: Young Indian IM Leon Luke Mendonca emerged victorious in the Skalicky chess festival in Slovakia, with 7.5 points from nine rounds in the tournament.

The Goa-based player (Elo rating 2472) remained unbeaten through the nine rounds and notched up six wins including one over higher-rated Pier Luigi Bosso (Italy, Elo 2600) in the sixth round.

The other wins for Mendonca came against Marek Pniaczek (Poland), Alexndr Skalsky (Czech Republic), Marcin Molenda (Poland), Thomas Dionisi (France) and Harry Grieve (England). He had three draws in the tournament.

The 14-year-old Mendonca drew his last round game against Matyas Marek (Czech Republic) to pip Jan Vykouk (Czech Republic) for the title by a half a point.

Mendonca had claimed second position in the Paracin Open in Serbia July and earlier in June won the open section at the Balaton Chess festival in Budapest.

AB opens up on ‘sticky’ challenge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

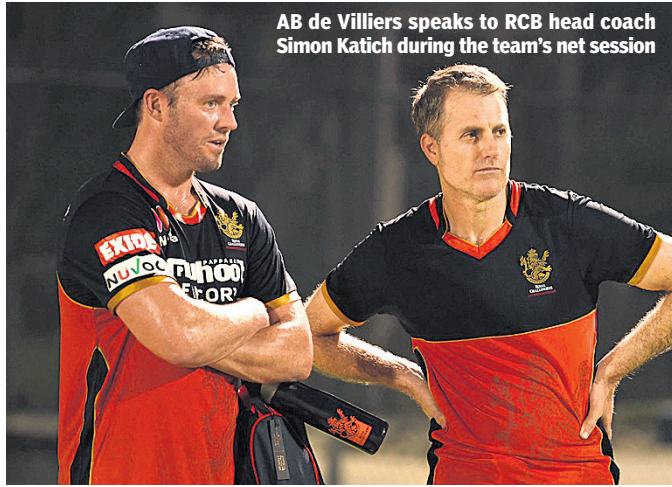
Dubai, August 31: The ‘sticky wicket’ was a ‘great challenge’ but South African star AB de Villiers left the ground after his first net session in ages a satisfied man, having got what he had wanted ahead of the IPL.

The 36-year-old, who turns out for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the T20 league, resumed training after a five-month long coronavirus-induced break for the sport and said the first sessions were pretty good as he stuck to the basics.

“It was very good, enjoyable to be out there, the wicket was a bit sticky so it was a great challenge, actually if I could have it my way, I would have wanted my first net session to go like this only after a long time,” De Villiers said in a video posted on RCB’s official Twitter handle.

The IPL will be held across three venues in the UAE from September 19 to November 10. “I kept my basics in place, watched the ball carefully, I played some nice shots in the end and it was enjoyable,” added De Villiers, who also donned the keeping gloves during the session.

De Villiers was in quarantine for six days after arriving in the UAE and hit the nets after clearing



three COVID-19 tests. The session was also attended by Umesh Yadav, Parthiv Patel and Gurkeerat Singh among others.

The team had hit the nets for the first time Saturday after successfully ending its quarantine period. Strength and conditioning coach Shanker Basu said: “There are three things we have to be mindful. One the players are coming after a long time and they will be ready to jump and go gang ho and it is our job to pull them back a little.

“Number two, there is oppres-

sive heat and that can be a telling thing, most importantly we need to

find the right balance in gym. From now onwards, it should just aid the skill part.”

RCB captain Virat Kohli, South African pace legend Dale Steyn, the spin trio of Yuzvendra Chahal, Washington Sundar and Shabbaz Nadeem were among the players who had attended the first net session.

“(It went) much better than expected, to be honest. I was pretty scared. I hadn’t picked up a bat for five months, but yeah it came out better than I thought, to be honest,” Kohli had said.

The 13th IPL was moved out of India due to the rising COVID-19 cases in the country. RCB have never won the IPL though they have finished runners-up thrice, most recently in 2016.

DADA EXPECTING HIGHEST RATING

Pune: Bullish about the IPL’s success as a TV-only event, BCCI President Sourav Ganguly Monday said he expects the T20 extravaganza, starting September 19, to shatter viewership records this year. “Crowds will watch it on television...they (the broadcasters) are actually expecting the highest rating of IPL this season because they believe if (people) don’t turn up in the ground, they will be actually watching on their television sets,” Ganguly said while delivering an online lecture as part of the ‘Symbiosis Golden Jubilee Lecture Series’. “There is a positive in everything,” he added.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: Odisha FC roped in Brazilian Diego Mauricio as their first foreign signing ahead of the seventh edition of Indian Super League (ISL). Mauricio has signed a one-year contract with the Bhubaneswar-based side.

The 29-year-old striker has the experience of playing at many top football leagues around the world. He made his senior club debut for Brazilian club Flamengo in 2010

where he linked up with football legend Ronaldinho.

He has played for other Brazilian teams like Sport Club do Recife, Bragantino and Centro Sportivo Alagoano. The Rio de Janeiro-born forward was part of Brazil’s U-20 squad and played alongside the likes of Phillipe Coutinho, Casemiro, Oscar, Felipe Anderson, Roberto Firmino and Neymar.

He has also travelled around the world playing in South Korea for Busan IPark and Gangwon FC, Al Qadisiyah in Saudi Arabia, Vitoria FC in Portugal, Russia’s FC Spartak Vladikavkaz and Chinese club Shijiazhuang Ever Bright FC.

OFC head coach Stuart Baxter said, “He is a player who can both combine with his teammates and also create chances on his own. When he gets to know the squad he will be a major asset for us.”

The striker, on his part, said, “I have heard and read a lot of interesting things about the young Indian players at OFC, the juggernauts and India as a country. This project excites me a lot and I am coming with the aim to win the league.”

Olympic flame out on display in Japan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, August 31: The Olympic flame is going on display here, just a short walk from the new National Stadium where it was supposed to be burning a month ago.

The flame arrived in Japan from Greece in March and has been largely hidden away here since the Olympics were postponed until next year because of the pandemic.

The flame was unveiled Monday at a small ceremony with Yoshiro Mori, the president of the Tokyo Olympic organizing committee, and Yasuhiro Yamashita, the president of the Japanese Olympic Committee.

The flame will be on display beginning Tuesday at the National Olympic Museum for at least the

next two months. Visitors can only enter the museum, which is located across the street from the new stadium, with a reservation.

The flame’s unveiling comes just days after Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced

his plans to resign. Abe was on hand in 2013 in Buenos Aires when the IOC picked Tokyo, and he was the highlight of the closing ceremony of the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro when he appeared as Nintendo game character Super Mario.

The fate of the Tokyo Olympics remains uncertain. Organizers and the International Olympic Committee say it will open July 23, 2021. But they have not revealed any details about how 15,400 Olympic and Paralympic athletes will be safe in Tokyo.



Biggest thrill of Bindra’s life ‘lasted two seconds’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra says the thrill – the biggest of his life – lasted merely two seconds after his gold at Beijing Games where relief was the first and only emotion he felt despite scripting history.

A web series titled ‘The Finish Line’ has been conceptualised to relive eight defining moments of Indian sports through the athletes themselves. And Bindra was the first guest to feature on the show hosted by ace squash player Saurav Ghosal.

“It was the greatest emotion that I had felt. I was very happy as this moment was the biggest thrill of my life, that thrill lasted for two seconds and that’s it,” Bindra said on the show, recalling the moment 12 years later.

“The greatest emotion I felt at that moment was the feeling of relief because, throughout my journey, I have been very obsessive with my goal.

“All my eggs were in one basket, certainly not the way I promote to young athletes. It was a huge amount

of relief that, what I had set out to do in my life, I was able to achieve that.”

Bindra remains India’s only individual gold medallist at the Olympics and he came tantalisingly close to adding another podium finish at the 2016 Rio Games, only to miss out by a point.

While it is documented, Bindra recalled how he carried on with his shooting after finding out that his gun had been tampered with just before the big final in Beijing.

“Just five minutes before the big final, I realised that the sight of my gun had been altered just a little bit. There was complete panic that was running through my head, but funnily enough, going into Beijing I had also trained for it.

“I was frozen for a moment though and had no clue what to do but giving up was not an option. I decided that I have to fight, hence I got up and tried to get my sights working in order. From there on I shot the best 10 shot of my life that eventually got me the medal.”

Bindra, who is also a World Championship gold medallist, said that even before he had shot his



first competition shot in Beijing, he considered himself as a winner in his own eyes.

“Well at that time it was very important for me to remain in the moment, I was not thinking ahead at all and just taking it one shot at a time,” he said.

“There was definitely a storm brewing up but since I had accepted the storm, all the things that were happening surrounding it did not really matter to me.

“I was just trying to be immersed in my technique and I was actually immersed in it. That is the difference between really performing well and not performing well at the highest level,” said the champion shooter.

Baseline Ventures has conceptualised and produced the eight-part web series, which is being presented by IndusInd Bank and is powered by Muse Wearables.

Besides Bindra, the other sporting stars who have been confirmed for the first season of the web series are Viswanathan Anand, Dinesh Karthik, Pankaj Advani, Smriti Mandhana, Leander Paes, Parul Parmar and Varun Singh Bhati.