



BLACKIE'S FIRST LOOK

Actor Ishaan Khatter shares first look pics as Blackie from upcoming flick *Khaali Peeli*

LEISURE P2



NATO CONDEMNS RUSSIA

NATO's Jens Stoltenberg condemns the 'appalling assassination attempt' on Russian politician Alexei Navalny

INTERNATIONAL P10



ALL-AMERICAN SHOWDOWN

Seeing off Gasparyan in the 2nd round, Serena Williams sets up US Open match against Sloane Stephens

SPORTS P12

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I never used facebook to spread hatred. I don't need it to spread hatred

SHORT TAKES

7 women killed in Tamil Nadu blast

Cuddalore: Seven women, including the firecracker unit licensee and her kin were killed and two workers critically injured in an explosion at a fireworks factory in Kattumannarkoil here on Friday, police said. Chief Minister K Palaniswami, who expressed his condolences to the bereaved families, announced a solatium of ₹2 lakh each to them. The factory owner Gandhimathi and eight other women were allegedly involved in making country firecrackers at the unit in Kurungudi village in Kattumannarkoil when a sudden explosion ripped through the structure, killing five women, police said.

Baripada MLA held for assault

Baripada: Baripada MLA Prakash Soren was arrested following a complaint that he along with his supporters had beaten Ganapati Jena, the executive engineer of the ITDA. Police registered a case on the basis of an FIR and called the MLA to the police station to inquire about the incident. He was arrested and produced at SDJM court where he was granted conditional bail. BJP workers staged an agitation in front of the police station, blocking a road Friday. The assault was due to an alleged delay in clearing the bill of a contractor.

NCB to arrest Rhea's brother

Mumbai: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Friday said it will soon arrest Showik Chakraborty, brother of main accused Rhea Chakraborty, and Samuel Miranda in connection with the drugs probe linked to the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, officials said. The questioning of the two is in the last stages and they are expected to be placed under arrest in the next few hours, they said. NCB sleuths, accompanied by police officials, raided the residence of Showik Chakraborty in Santa Cruz (West) and Miranda's house in suburban Andheri (West).

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	38357.18 ↓ 633.76
NIFTY	11333.90 ↓ 193.60
DOLLAR	73.31 ↓ ₹0.36
EURO	86.89 ↓ ₹0.11
GOLD	₹50,500 ↓ ₹242
SILVER	₹66,512 ↓ ₹414

WEATHER	
	BHUB CTK
MAX	35.1°C 35.5°C
MIN	26.0°C 24.8°C
Humidity	94% 76%
Rainfall	Trace Nil
Forecast	
Partly cloudy sky	

NEET, JEE to go ahead: SC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 4: The Supreme Court Friday dismissed the pleas, including the one filed by ministers of six opposition-ruled states, seeking review of its August 17 order which paved the way for holding NEET and JEE exams physically.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhusan, B R Gavai and Krishna Murari, which considered the pleas in-chamber, also rejected the applications seeking listing of the review petition in the open court.

"Applications seeking permission to file review petitions are allowed. We have carefully gone through the review petitions and the connected papers. We find no merit in the review petitions and the same are accordingly dismissed," the bench said in its order.

National Testing Agency (NTA) which conducts both the exams is holding JEE Main Exams from September 1-6, while

NEET exams will be held September 13. One of the review pleas was filed by ministers from West Bengal (Moloy Ghatak), Jharkhand (Rameshwar Oraon), Rajasthan (Raghu Sharma), Chhattisgarh (Amarjeet Bhagat), Punjab (B S Sidhu) and Maharashtra (Uday Ravindra Sawant).

The apex court had August 17 dismissed a plea seeking postponement of JEE (Main) April 2020 and NEET-Undergraduate examinations amid spurt in number of COVID-19 cases. The states' petition called that order "cryptic, non-speaking" and one that failed to address various aspects and complexities involved in a matter of this magnitude. The review petition said the mere fact that lakhs of students have registered for the exam - an argument frequently put up by the central government - is not indicative of their consent or their willingness to attend physical exams.

DO NOT DEFER COMPARTMENT EXAMS: CBSE

The CBSE Friday opposed in the Supreme Court a plea seeking postponement of compartment exams for 12th class scheduled this month, saying all "necessary" safety measures for students are being taken in view of COVID-19 pandemic. A bench comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna asked the counsel for the petitioner whether postponement of the examinations will help the students. "Without examination where do you stand. Is there any other methodology contemplated by CBSE," the bench asked during the hearing conducted through video conferencing. The counsel for the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) said the board has increased the number of examination centres for compartment tests from 575 to 1,278.

Amid protests, govt orders varsities to implement law

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: Amid protests against the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Ordinance by Opposition parties, the state government asked vice-chancellors (VCs) of all state-run universities to take actions in pursuance to the legislation Friday.

Senior BJP leader Prithviraj Harichandan held a presser where he lambasted the government over its decision and said that the step may interfere with the autonomy and functioning of universities.

"What was the urgent need to promulgate an ordinance to do away with other legislations governing universities? There have been massive protests against the legislation. The government has planned to bring an undemocratic way of interfering with the functioning of universities," he said.

He warned that the move signals the government's intention of bring-



ing the universities under their control. "The government should not try to compromise on the reputation and autonomy of the universities. It has decided to close down 596 primary schools, there is rampant vacancy of teachers in the education system and now the government plans to interfere systematically in universities," he said.

The BJD however refuted all allegations and said that the amendments were brought to boost efficacy and transparency. "University financial details were earlier placed in the State Legislative Assembly which was not accessible by all. Now the students, parents and teachers would be more aware about

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: With rising COVID-19 cases in the capital city, only around 5.15 percent of the residents have developed antibodies for the infection, warned Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary Friday. "So far more than 1600 samples have been collected by the BMC in the first round of the second phase of serological surveillance. But the high risk group is yet to be tested under the surveillance. The first round result of the second surveillance shows that Bhubaneswar is better placed in terms of Covid infection so far. But the low antibodies prevalent rate puts the city into high risk zone. It may lead to a further surge in the infection rate in near fu-

GODAVARI DIVERSION



The Pattiseema Right Main Canal carries water from Godavari towards Krishna at Jakkampudi near Vijayawada, Friday

PTI PHOTO

CHINA'S INFRA PUSH IN TIBET

REUTERS

Beijing, Sept 4: China is planning a more than 1 trillion yuan (\$146 billion) push to accelerate infrastructure investment in Tibet, including new and previously announced projects, three sources familiar with the matter said.

The renewed push to step-up development of the remote and impoverished southwestern region signals Beijing's intent to bolster frontier security amid heightened border tensions with India in recent months, two of the sources said.

Last week, during a senior Communist Party meeting on Tibet's future governance, President Xi Jinping lauded achievements and praised frontline officials but said more efforts were needed to enrich, rejuvenate and strengthen unity in the region. He said a number of major infrastructure projects and public facilities would be completed, including the Sichuan-Tibet Railway, according to remarks published by the official Xinhua news agency. The construction plans include completion of the challenging middle section of a high-elevation Sichuan-Tibet railway link, a railway line between Nepal and Tibet that has remained in the planning stages, and a newly planned dry port in the Tibet Autonomous Region, the sources said.

The push signals Beijing's intent to bolster frontier security

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 4: The pending by-election to one Lok Sabha and 64 assembly seats spread across 15 states, including two from Odisha, and the Bihar assembly polls will be held around the same time, the Election Commission said Friday.

The term of the Bihar assembly ends November 29 and elections are likely to be held sometime in October-November.

The Assembly constituencies of Balasore and Tirtol in the state fell vacant after the demise of MLAs Madan Mohan Dutta and Bishnu Chandra Das.

Among the 64 vacant assembly seats, 27 are in Madhya Pradesh. Most of these 27 seats fell vacant when rebel Congress members resigned from the party and the assembly to join the BJP.

With the resignations of the Congress members, the Kamal Nath-led government fell and the BJP returned to power. One of the major factors in clubbing them together is the relative

ease of movement of central forces and related logistics issues, a Commission statement said.

Considering that General Assembly Elections of Bihar are also due and required to be completed before November 29, 2020, the Commission has decided to conduct all the 65 by-elections and the General Assembly Elections of Bihar around the same time.... Announcement of schedule of Bihar General Assembly Elections as well as these by-elections will be done by the Commission at appropriate time, it said.

The issue of holding the by-elections came up at the meeting of the Commission Friday.

The Commission reviewed the reports and inputs from chief secretaries and chief electoral officers of many of the concerned states seeking deferment of the by-elections in their states in view of several factors including the extraordinary heavy rains in some places and other constraints like pandemic, the statement said.

EC sounds poll bugle for Bihar, 65 by-polls

The by-polls for the Assembly constituencies of Balasore and Tirtol will be held sometime in October-November

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AFTER DETECTING A PULSE, LEBANESE EMERGENCY WORKERS TEAMED UP WITH CHILEANS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE WERE ANY SURVIVORS

A month on, heartbeat detected under Beirut rubble

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beirut, Sept 4: Rescuers resumed a search Friday for possible survivors under rubble in Beirut, buoyed by faint hopes of a miracle a month after a monster blast ripped through the city's port.

The cataclysmic August 4 explosion killed a total of 191 people, making it Lebanon's deadliest peacetime disaster: One month on, seven people are still listed as missing.

Hopes emerged Thursday that one of them could still be found alive after a specialist sensor device detected a heart beat under the debris of a flattened building.

Crews of rescue workers from Chile and Lebanon used their hands

Friday to lift chunks of rubble from the site between the hard-hit districts of Gemmayzeh and Mar Mikhaail.

They resumed their efforts after pausing briefly overnight, an AFP photographer at the scene said.

"We have excavated rubble but we haven't reached a conclusion yet," said George Abou Moussa of Lebanon's civil defence.

The pulse they detected Friday had already slowed significantly compared to a previous recording, said Nicholas Saade, who coordinates between the Chilean and Lebanese rescuers.

"After removing the big chunks we scanned again for heartbeats or respiration, it showed low beat/respiration" levels of seven per minute,



CHILEAN HEROES: A Chilean rescuer uses a sound tracking machine at the site of a collapsed building in Beirut, Lebanon, Friday

PTI PHOTO

he told AFP. "The reading before was about 16 to 18," he added. The area excavated by rescuers was

among the hardest hit by the blast that was so powerful it was heard in Cyprus, some 240 kilometres (150

miles) away. The explosion ravaged swathes of Beirut and piled on new misery for Lebanese already reeling from the coronavirus pandemic and the country's worst economic crisis in decades.

A sniffer dog deployed by Chilean rescuers Wednesday night had responded to a scent from the site of a collapsed building in Gemmayzeh, Beirut governor Marwan Abboud said. After detecting a pulse Thursday, Lebanese emergency workers teamed up with the Chileans determine whether there were any survivors.

News of the search drew crowds of people hopeful that another life could be saved. Using their hands and shovels, they moved Friday in

the "direction of the signal", trying to find a tunnel or entry point that would give them access to a "survivor or corpse", Saade said, without elaborating on how long the process could take.

Lebanon, already mired in an economic crisis before the port blast, is not equipped for disaster management. The country lacks the tools and expertise to handle advanced search and rescue operations which are now being supported by experts from Chile, France and the United States.

The Chileans arrived recently with a sniffer dog trained to find humans, as well as specialist sensor devices that can detect heart beats and breathing.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES Today is a bright day, and the stars foretell success for you. If you find yourself in a creative mood, indulge in some activity that will satisfy the urge. But, Ganesha says, if you are driving alone, exercise a great deal of caution to be on the safe side.

TAURUS This all matters are likely to revolve around the opposite sex. Women are going to feature prominently and significantly in everything that you do. So says Ganesha. That is good. But you will be inclined to be lazy and laid back and may thus reduce the effect and impact of efforts.

GEMINI You need to pay more attention to yourself today. Your kind and generous nature means you often think about others rather than about yourself. Now is the time to pay attention to your own needs. You need to spend more time with your family and friends as well, says Ganesha.

CANCER You will try to improve ties with beloved ones. Your devotion and dedication will reap benefits for the future. You will have physical and mental happiness. You will keep your future in mind. This will boost your self-confidence. Ganesha's blessings are with you.

LEO The bourgeoisie feasted on cake, while the masses starved for want of a mere loaf of bread. Ganesha foresees something similar for you today, as you show the propensity to indulge in unwanted expenses. Whether it is impulsive decisions or compulsive buying, they shall not serve as an excuse on a later date when the milk is already spilt.

VIRGO An easy-going day full of fun and light moments will help you vent all that pressure built up inside you. Ganesha predicts a progressive and profitable day for you. Expect to honour invitations to social events or even parties.

LIBRA It is more than likely, and possible indeed, that you will surpass your own past performances today. All this is on the cards, despite the fact that your peers at work will try to outwit you. But it is your consummate set of skills that shall help you pre-empt all such attempts, says Ganesha.

SCORPIO Don't put off cultivating healthy eating habits, says Ganesha. You should do better to control over-indulging in food as it may lead to obesity. Ganesha advises you to stick to a healthy lifestyle, especially when it comes to meals.

SAGITTARIUS The wheel of fortune turns towards you today, says Ganesha. Make a wish and it's bound to come true. However don't be over-confident when it comes to decision-making. In case of disappointments, this too shall pass' would be the best remedy.

CAPRICORN You will find the day to be taxing, mostly because of the amount of work delegated to you, says Ganesha. But it will take trouble quite an effort to dampen your spirit. You will be in the fray in the latter part of the day, but will leave your rivals trailing behind in terms of business strategies.

AQUARIUS You will be on a spending spree today. But, make sure that your desire to enjoy life doesn't burn a hole in your pocket. Watch your words and steps, as people are observing your every move.

PISCES You will feel very emotional about those who are close to your heart. Those people who know you will endear you because of this quality of yours. But Ganesha adds a word of caution; take care of those people whom you hold close to your heart because in your sentiments for them you might not notice their bad qualities or forgive their mistakes.



ROBERT PATTINSON +VE, THE BATMAN HALTED

Hollywood actor Robert Pattinson is said to have tested positive for COVID-19, causing filming of the much-anticipated movie 'The Batman' to halt. According to Vanity Fair, Pattinson tested positive only a few days after the shooting of the movie had resumed near London following lockdown.

LUKE WILSON TO HOST EMERGENCY CALL

Actor Luke Wilson has been roped in by broadcaster ABC as the host of its upcoming unscripted series, *Emergency Call*, that chronicles the first few minutes of emergencies told through the lens of America's 911 call takers. The series will launch on the network September 28, reported Variety.



Thrilled to be back at work: Big B

Mumbai: Amitabh Bachchan is back at work, and is loving it. The veteran actor has tweeted about his hectic schedule that includes campaign films, outfit change, still shoots and more. "T 3648 - yooo .. hooo !!! .. back to the grind and work .. 4 campaign films .. 5 outfit changes .. 4 still shoots .. 5 hrs one day .. other than me everyone else looking like they ready for a 'heist' .. and tomorrow on to KBC .. !!!" he posted on his verified Instagram account along with a collage of photos that seem to have been taken during the still shoots. Rapper Badshah commented: "Unstoppable." Actor Manish Paul also wrote: "Yesss more power to you Sir.. Keep inspiring." Meanwhile, Big B is set to return as host of the popular TV quiz show *Kaun Banega Crorepati* in its season 12. The first promo of the new season is out, with Bachchan inspiring people to overcome setbacks and turn them into comebacks. This is Big B's first shooting assignment after he was discharged from hospital after recovering from, Covid-19.



When Salman made Karisma laugh

Mumbai: Actress Karisma Kapoor reminisced about the time when she was shooting with superstar Salman Khan in Mauritius. In a Friday afternoon post on Instagram, Karisma shared a still from the song *Pyaar dilon ka mela hai*, which was shot on her and Salman in the 2000 release, *Dulhan Hum Le Jayenge*. "I vividly remember the sun was setting and we needed to get this shot done while sk was making us all laugh.. fun times in #mauritius Guess the film and song ?" she wrote as caption, with the tags #flash-backfriday #guessinggame #memories. Karisma recently shared that she finds happiness in simple little things. She took to Instagram and posted a picture sitting on her balcony. She makes a casual statement in a black T-shirt and blue jeans in the image. The actress was last seen on screen in the web show, *Mentalhood*, which marked her digital debut.



New Jersey: The Taapsee Pannu-Bhumi Pednekar starrer *Saand Ki Aankh* has re-released here amid the Covid pandemic. *New Jersey hai bullseye ke liye taiyaar!* *#SaandKiAankh* is re-releasing in Regal Hadley Theatre, South Plainfield and Regal Commerce Center and RPX, North Brunswick Township," read a post on the official Instagram account of Reliance Entertainment, about the film's re-release in the American city. Taapsee also shared the post on Instagram

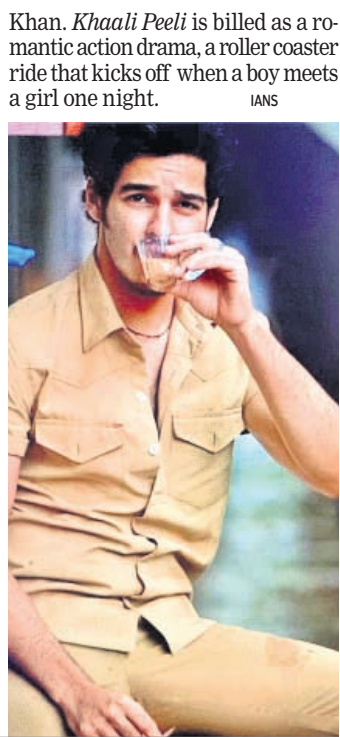


Saand Ki Aankh re-releases in the US

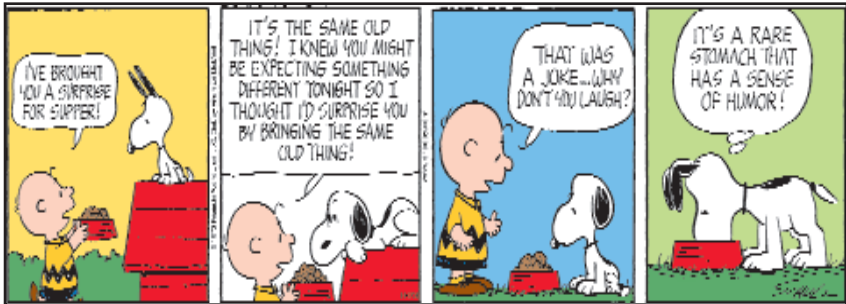
Story. Directed by Tushar Hiranandani, the movie is based on the lives of India's oldest sharpshooters, Prakash Tomar and Chandro Tomar. Taapsee and Bhumi essayed the roles of the sharpshooters in the film, which was released last year. Before *Saand Ki Aankh*, films like *Super 30*, *Good Newwz* and *Dream Girl* have hit the big screens in other countries recently, even as theatres continue to remain shut in India.

Ishaan Khatter's first look test for Khaali Peeli

Mumbai: Actor Ishaan Khatter has shared snapshots of his first look test for the upcoming film, *Khaali Peeli*, on Instagram. In the images, Ishaan is dressed as a taxi driver. In one of the pictures, he is seen lighting a cigarette. "First look test.. BLACKIE.Man, what a blast this one has been. Thank you @macriaan for giving me one of my favourite characters so far. Been a year since we first began production on *Khaali Peeli* and things have really come back serendipitously in a full circle. Starting and ending on the same studio floor. Gearing up. Time for blast off," Ishaan wrote. The film also features Ananya Panday and is directed by Maqbool



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

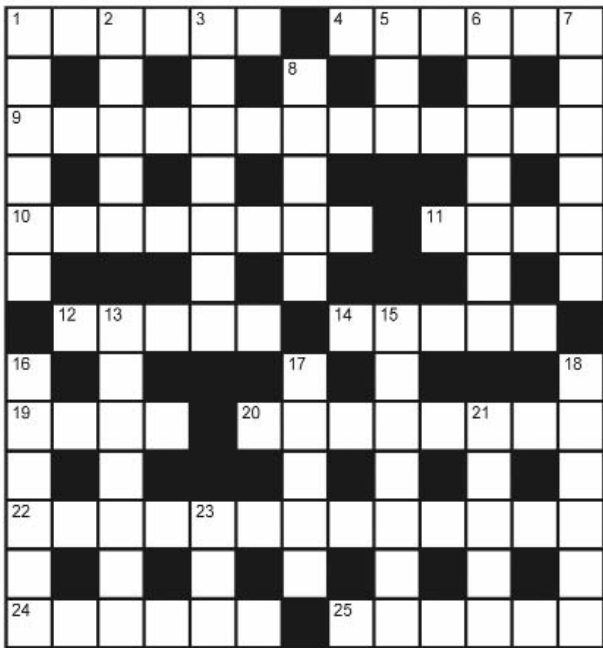


BREVITY



FUN post

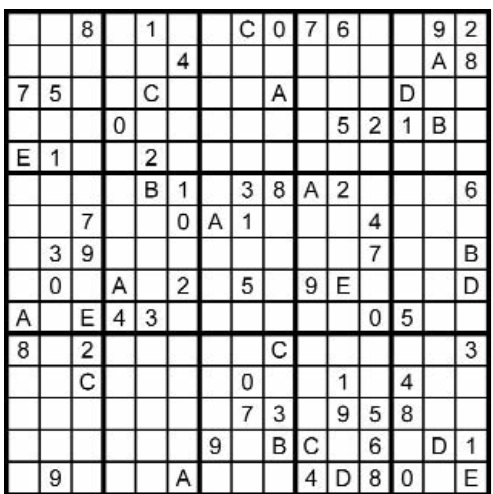
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 1 Basket material
 - 4 Slips by
 - 9 Sicily site
 - 10 Password's pal
 - 11 Old Icelandic literary work
 - 12 Surfer's need
 - 14 Backgammon piece
 - 19 Neighbor of Saudi Arabia
 - 20 Former Spanish gold coin
 - 22 Horror film ghoul (4,9)
 - 24 Invigorating drinks
 - 25 Whirlpool
- Down
- 1 Hearsay
 - 2 Sundae topper
 - 3 Profound
 - 5 Appia
 - 6 Elbe River city
 - 7 Arabian Nights hero
 - 8 Streetcars
 - 13 Forsake
 - 15 Pipe filler
 - 16 Cold dessert
 - 17 Demolish
 - 18 Like some barber shops
 - 21 Blatant
 - 23 Dry, as wine

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



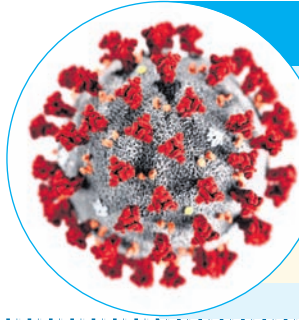
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



RIVER AS MIRROR

Images of clouds reflect on a swollen Mahanadi river in Cuttack, Friday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,65,49,815	1,87,33,086	8,74,500
India	39,36,747	30,37,151	68,472
Odisha	1,16,678	90,331	531

Drug park at Gopalpur to create 5K jobs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: In a step towards creating employment opportunities through industrialisation in pharmaceutical sector, the state government has initiated steps to set up a Bulk Drug Park at Gopalpur in Ganjam district.

Holding a high-level meeting in this regard, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy Friday approved the proposal for setting up the park in Tata SEZ (special economic zone) at Gopalpur.

Tripathy directed the Industry department to form a State Implementing Agency (SIA) in the shape of a special purpose vehicle (SPV) and work out a detailed proposal in this regard within a fortnight.

The site is well connected with port and railways for communication. It is less than two hours reach from Biju Patnaik International Airport here. There is also an air strip at Gopalpur which can be utilised for swift communication,

EMPLOYMENT BOOST



THE PROJECT WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED THROUGH FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE UNION AND STATE GOVERNMENTS

- Total expenditure on infrastructure development in the park was estimated to be around Rs 1,500 crore
- The project will come up on 1,000-acre land in Tata SEZ at Gopalpur
- Chief Secretary directed the officials to form an implementing agency and work out the DPR in 15 days

official sources said.

Around 1,000 acre land required for the park is available at the SEZ. The land is well connected with National Highway-16 which is considered as the spine for proposed Odisha Economic Corridor, the

source said.

It was decided at the meeting that an SPV will be formed involving IDCO as lead promoter and TSSZEL (Tata Group) and co-promoter to carry forward the project proposal.

Industry Secretary Hemant Sharma said that the park would have all the advanced infrastructure facilities including central effluent treatment plant, solid waste management facilities, warehousing, dedicated power distribution system, steam generation and distribution system, common cooling system, advanced testing laboratories, centre of excellence, technology business incubator, intellectual property right services and the like.

The cost of infrastructure development in the park was estimated to be around Rs 1,500 crore. The project would be implemented through financial support both from Union and state governments, he said.

Sharma further said that the park would create employment opportunities for around 5,000 people. The Chief Secretary asked the officials concerned to send the proposal to Government of India by September 25 for necessary approval.

Bolangir sub-collector suspended on sexual harassment charge

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: The state government Friday suspended Bolangir sub-collector Sanjay Mishra following allegations of sexual harassment against him.

“The Governor of Odisha, in exercise of powers conferred by Clause (a) of sub-rule (1) of Rule 12 of the Odisha Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1962, hereby places Sanjay Mishra, OAS Grade-A (SB), under suspension with immediate effect,” reads an order issued by General Administration (GA) department.

Mishra was asked not to leave Bolangir district headquarters without prior permission of the district Collector.

A few days after a lady working in Bolangir Collector’s office accused Mishra of misbehaviour, the Collector had formed a three-member team led by a woman official to probe the allegations, said sources.

NITI Aayog lauds state’s SNP model

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 4: The NITI Aayog has appreciated Odisha’s decentralised model of production and distribution of food under Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) through women self-help groups (SHGs).

NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Amitabh Kant has stated that decentralised model of SNP production and distribution through greater engagement with SHGs in Odisha and Kerala has brought in greater transparency and efficiency through elimination of middlemen. It has empowered women SHGs and given a new source of income to them, he added.

Kant has requested other states to adopt these models in order to achieve significant progress towards ensuring health and nutri-



tion of women and children.

It is to mention here that Women & Child Development and Mission Shakti department of Odisha government has engaged women SHGs in preparation and packaging of take home ration (THR) under Supplementary Nutrition Programme with fixed day approach.

Under THR, Chhatua (sattu) is mixed on 23 of every month and is being distributed to beneficiaries on first day of the month. The whole process and supply chain management is being centrally monitored by ‘Mo Chhatua’ app and website.

More COVID hospitals on the cards

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: In a bid to meet demand for COVID care facilities, the state government Friday decided to set up new COVID hospitals and additional facility in Cuttack, Koraput and Khurda districts.

Health and Family Welfare Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra has written letters to the Collectors of the three districts and deans of the medical colleges.

The facility will be setup in the existing new medicine block of medicine department of SCB Medical Colleges & Hospital in

Cuttack having 200 general beds (186 general beds and 14 MICU beds). Additional 25 new ICU beds will be constructed in the unit.

At Capital Hospital, three to five ICU beds will be functional in the cabins for COVID patients while 25 ICU beds will be added in Aditya Ashwini Hospital in Bhubaneswar. Bhubaneswar-based Kanungo Institute of Diabetes Specialties (KIDS) will have 55 general beds, 4 maternity beds, six NICU, ICU-34 (ventilator 10), one operation theatre and one labor room.

The Sun and Srusti hospitals in Cuttack will have 155 beds.

2 crorepati officials in Vig net

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: Vigilance sleuths Friday arrested two state government officials for allegedly amassing huge assets disproportionate to their known sources of income.

The accused were identified as Dillip Kumar Patel, executive officer of Brajarajnagar Municipality in Jharsuguda district, and Bidyadhar Behera, sub-assistant registrar of co-operative societies in Dhenkanal, Superintendent of Police (Coordination), Vigilance Directorate, said in a statement.

The Vigilance sleuths of Sambalpur Division searched Patel’s government quarters at Jharsuguda, a dou-

The accused are Dillip Kumar Patel, executive officer of Brajarajnagar Municipality and Bidyadhar Behera, sub-assistant registrar of co-operative societies in Dhenkanal

Rs 3.35 crore. Since he could not account for the properties satisfactorily, a case was registered and he was arrested Thursday, the statement said.

He was forwarded to the court of special judge at Sambalpur which remanded him to judicial custody till September 16.

Behera was also arrested Thursday following raids on his triple-storey residential building and a flat in the state capital, a house in his native village and office room at Dhenkanal.

The officer was found in possession of assets worth Rs 1.39 crore which he could not account for; the statement said, adding that he was arrested and forwarded to the court which remanded him to judicial custody till September 15.

Two poachers held; 11kg venison seized

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, Sept 4: Altogether nine persons including two poachers were held during a joint raid by the police and Forest department officials in Chandaka area here Friday.

At least 11 kilograms of venison, a spotted deer skin, a gun, 10 bullets, a few machetes and 10kg lead were seized from the arrested persons, sources said.

The arrested persons were identified as Nirmal Srichandan, Kanhei Nayak, Anil Chami and Pradyumna Sahu of Simulipatna, Ganda Hemram of Phirikinali and Tarunakanta Samantaray, Bikash Kumar Pradhan, Srikant Samantaray and Jagmohan Mangaraj of Chandaka. The arrested persons were produced in a local court, police said.

According to police, there were allegations that some poachers from the nearby villages used to kill animals from Chandaka forests and sell the meat to interested parties.

“Today morning, we had a tip-



off that poachers were selling venison at Phirikinala. Soon, a joint team of Chandaka police and Forest department raided the house of poacher Ganda Hemram and seized two kg venison,” said a police officer.

The team later arrested another poacher, Nirmal Srichandan, from Simulipatna and seized a deer skin, gun and bullets and machetes. During interrogation, the duo admitted that they had sold deer meat to Kanhei, Anil, Pradyumna, Tarunakanta, Bikash, Srikant and Jagmohan, said the police officer.

“Our team arrested all the seven buyers and seized 9 kilograms of deer meat from them,” he added.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: Flight operations between Bhubaneswar and Surat are all set to resume September 9. With this, the total number of flights operating from Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here would reach 20.

According to sources, the flight operations by Air India will connect the temple city of Bhubaneswar to Surat, the textile hub of Gujarat. The flight will take off every Monday and Wednesday.

The flight will leave Surat airport at 3:30pm and reach Bhubaneswar at 5:20pm. Similarly, the return flight will leave BPIA at 6:20pm and reach Surat at 8:10pm every Monday and Wednesday.

The services between the



The flight will leave Surat airport at 3:30pm and reach Bhubaneswar at 5:20pm

Similarly, the return flight will leave BPIA at 6:20pm and reach Surat at 8:10pm every Monday and Wednesday

two cities had begun January 20 observing large number of Odia people working in Surat. However, the services were suspended in February as the COVID-19 cases surged in Surat.

Earlier, 18 flights started operations as nation saw phase-wise resumption of domestic flight services. These include services to Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai, Jharsuguda.

“We have started two other flights in last week of August. The number of passengers is growing with each passing day, so we need to provide them service,” said BPIA Director, VV Rao.

Meanwhile, Transport department joint secretary DS Jena Friday wrote a letter to the BPIA director stating that the government has allowed operation of three flights.

“I am directed to say that, state government is pleased to allow operation of three additional flights from BPIA, Bhubaneswar connecting Surat, Bengaluru and Kolkata with emphasis on strict adherence to COVID-19 protocol,” Transport department joint secretary wrote to BPIA director.

The city airport still remains functional with less than 50 per cent of its regular services. While the BPIA catered to about 45 flights every day, it reached 20 in this week only.

RELIANCE HOME FINANCE

RELIANCE HOME FINANCE LIMITED

Branch Office: Plot No. 2863/3719, 3rd Floor, Gitanjali Complex Lewis Road, Bhubaneswar, Orissa 751002, Registered Office: - 11th Floor, The Ruby, Plot No. 29 Ruby Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Dadar West, Mumbai-400028

POSSESSION NOTICE (As per Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Reliance Home Finance Ltd. under the Securitization, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued Demand Notices upon the Borrowers/Co-borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower/Co-borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Co-borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates.

The Borrower/Co-borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Reliance Home Finance Ltd.

Name of The Borrower / Address	Co-Borrower And Guarantor Name	Date & Amount mentioned as per Demand Notice	Date & Amount mentioned as per Possession Notice	Date of Symbolic Possession	Property Address of Secured Assets
GANGES GARDENS REALTORS PRIVATE LIMITED, residing at, 37A BENTICK STREET 2nd FLOOR, ROOM NO 215, KOLKATA-700069 also at : PLOT NO- 230/2202, KHATA NO- 412/440, P.S- MANCHESWAR RASHMI DELIGHT, BHUBANESHWAR -751010	1. NIKUNJ BHARTIA 2. RAJANI BHARTIA both residing at, 37A BENTICK STREET 2nd FLOOR, ROOM NO 215, KOLKATA-700069 also at, 640, Block-O New Alipore, Kolkata-700053 4. SARALABALA MOHAPATRA W/O P.K.R Mahapatra, residing at 223, Naharakanta Rudrapur, Ballanta Khorda, Orissa- 752101	31st December 2019 Rs. 9,40,52,662/- (Rupees Nine Crore Forty Lac Fifty Two Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty Two only)	01st September, 2020 Rs. 10,55,34,019/- (Rupees Ten Crore Fifty Five Lac Thirty Four and Nineteen only)	01st September, 2020	Description of Immovable Property SCHEUDLE OF PROPERTY District: Khorda D.S.R. Office : Khorda at Bhubaneswar Tahasil & No. : Bhubaneswar, 292 Police Station : Baliana (Old) & Mancheswar (New) Mouza : RUDRAPUR Khata No. (Settlement) : 143 (One Hundred Forty-three) Conversion Khata No. : 412/440 (Four Hundred Twelve by Four Hundred Forty) Conversion Plot No. : 230/2202 (Two Hundred Thirty by Two Hundred Two Hundred Two) Area: Ac. 1.00 decimal (One Acre) Kisama : Gharabari Rent : Rs. 525/- (Rupees Five Hundred Twenty-five) Bounded By : North - Canal Road, South - Plot No. 233 & Rest portion of Plot No. 230, East - Plot No. 231, West - Plot No. 229 & Passage for Part portion of Plot No. 230

The Borrower/co-borrowers/Mortgagor(s) attention is invited to the provision of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Date: 04-Sept-2020
Place: Orissa

Sd/-
(Authorized Officer)
Reliance Home Finance Limited.

OMC
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6th September
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7th September
Bharatanatyam
P. Praveen Kumar
Mardala
Guru Dhaneswar Swain

8th September
Kathak
Gauri Diwaker
Carnatic Vocal
Abhishek Raghuram

8th September
Vilasini Nityam
Purvadhanashree
Santoor
Pt. Tarun Bhattacharya

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TEACHERS' DAY

Dearth of teachers hits govt schools in Odisha



As per Niti Aayog's SEQI report 2019, the state government lays a lot of stress on posting of teachers in primary and secondary schools. However, nearly 25 per cent of elementary schools in Odisha have failed to meet the norms mandated under the Right to Education Act

While efforts should be made to fill up vacant posts, crucial to imparting quality education in classrooms, the state government has decided to close 6,340 schools

At least 21,000 teacher positions in government-run primary schools are lying vacant which could be one of the reasons for the increased drop-outs in rural Odisha

In a state where thousands of government schools are being closed on the alibi of low-enrolment of children, schools without adequate number of teachers will deprive children of their learning

RUCHI KASHYAP | EXECUTIVE TRUSTEE OF ATMASHAKTI TRUST

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: More than 21,000 teacher posts are lying vacant at government primary schools in the state, a report of the school and mass education department had said during the budget session of the Assembly last year.

Even though the state government lays a lot of stress on posting of teachers in all primary and secondary schools on a priority basis, nearly 25 per cent of elementary schools in the state failed to meet

the norms mandated under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, said Niti Aayog's School Education Quality Index (SEQI) report 2019.

While efforts should be made to fill up vacant posts, crucial to imparting quality education in classrooms, the state government has decided to close 6,340 schools. At least 21,000 teacher positions in government-run primary schools are lying vacant which could be one of the reasons for the increased drop-outs in rural Odisha.

"A dearth of teachers has botched up learning at government-run

schools in Odisha. This has also hit the education of underprivileged and poor children," said Ruchi Kashyap, Executive Trustee of Atmashakti Trust, an NGO that works on education.

"In a state where thousands of government schools are being closed on the alibi of low-enrolment of children, schools without adequate number of teachers will deprive children of their learning," added Kashyap.

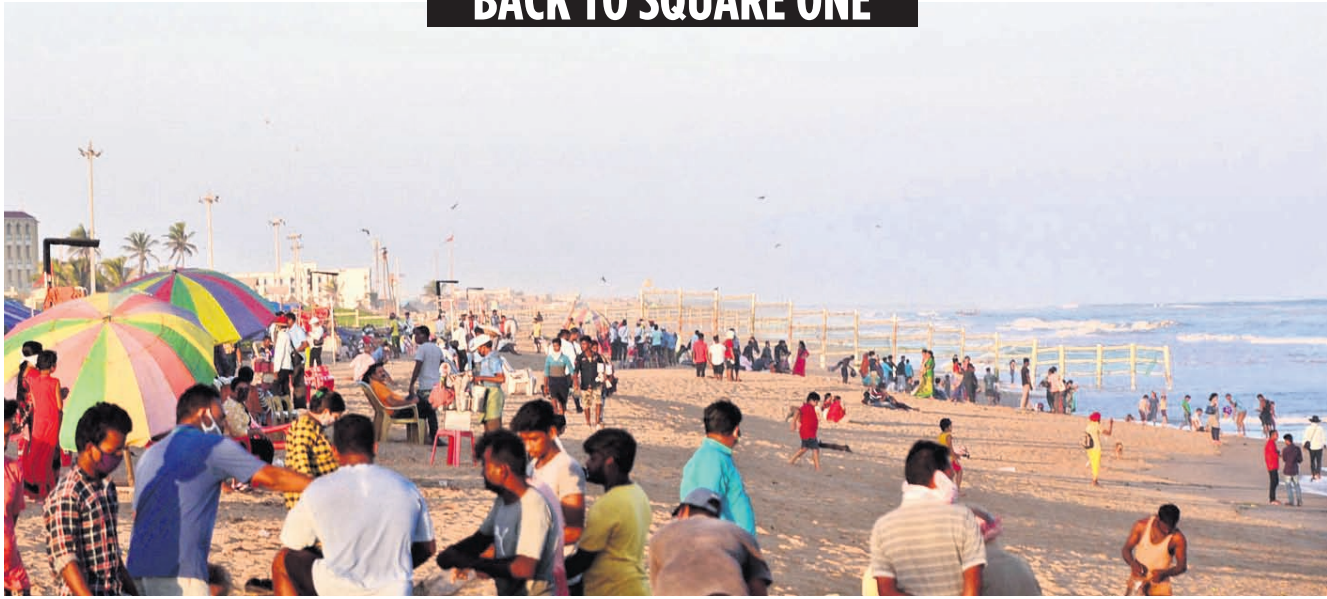
In July this year, some state-level people's organizations undertook a survey of 2,851 school children of Class III, Class V, and Class VIII to assess the learning outcome of children in government schools in 17 districts.

The survey found that out of 845 students of Class VIII, 48% were below the required standard in English. Similarly in Mathematics, it was 45% among children. The learning level of Class III and Class V students is also worrisome. Out of 1,088 students in Class V, 59% could not meet the expected level in English, 53% in Mathematics and 31% in Odia language.

One of the reasons being attributed to the low-level of learning among children was the lack of required number of teachers in schools or teacher absenteeism, said Anjan Pradhan, educationist and a member of the people's organisation that carried out the survey.

Meanwhile, the department is working on filling up of the trained graduate teacher (TGT) posts by appointing contractual teachers. The (DEOs) have been asked to submit the updated vacancy status of teachers in their respective districts, an official said.

BACK TO SQUARE ONE



After remaining out of the bounds for visitors for nearly five months in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, Puri beach Friday witnessed a good number of footfall as the government eased the COVID-19 norms

OP PHOTO

Cabinet move will hit autonomy of varsities: AIDS0

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: The All India Democratic Students' Organisation objected to the state government's decision of bringing all universities under the Odisha Universities Act, 1989. They have presented a memorandum to Governor Ganeshi Lal at his official residence Friday. They also opposed the decision of the state government increasing the tenure of VC to four years from three years and assigning the responsibility of selection of teachers for the university to OPSC.

Ganesh Tripathy, president, AIDS0, said the government decision will impact the autonomy of university and affect administration. "The government interference in selection of the VC will be harmful for education as it can lead to favoritism," he added.

Degree colleges: Admission to begin from September 8

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: Registration for admissions to degree and autonomous colleges in various streams for academic year 2020-21 will start September 8.

As per a notification issued by the Higher Education department Friday, the registration process for admissions to degree colleges, including self-financing courses and Sanskrit (Shastri), would start September 8.

Students can apply for the courses online by filling Common Application Form (CAF) on Student Academic Management System (SAMS) website. The last date for submission of the application is September 22.

Admissions to degree courses will be conducted in two rounds. The first merit list will be published



- Students can apply for the courses online by filling Common Application Form (CAF) on Student Academic Management System (SAMS) website
- For any information and clarification, candidates can contact the nearest SAMS resource centre or call Sanjog Helpline on toll free number 155335 or 1800-345-6770

September 28 and students can pay the admission fees between September 28 and October 1. The first admission will be carried out from September 29 to October 2. The first final merit list will be out at 5pm October 3.

Similarly, the second round selection merit list will be announced October 8, for which the admission process will be held between October

9 and 12.

As per the notification, after the completion of two rounds, the vacant seats will be filled through spot admission for which detailed guidelines will be provided later.

For any information and clarification, candidates can contact the nearest SAMS resource centre or call Sanjog Helpline on toll free number 155335 or 1800-345-6770.

₹1.5cr DA lands factories & boilers deputy dir in jail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: The deputy director of Factories and Boilers Directorate, Ramesh Kumar Behera, was arrested after he was found in possession of disproportionate assets (DA) worth over ₹1.5 crore, Vigilance sources here said Friday.

Behera's arrest comes a day after the Vigilance sleuths had raided several properties belonging to him. Acting on allegations against him, separate teams of the anti-corruption wing of the Odisha Police Thursday carried out simultaneous raids at six places including Behera's offices and residences at Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Jajpur and Pondicherry.



According to sources, allegations of Behera availing as many as 70 trips to foreign countries along with his family had surfaced a few days back. The Vigilance sleuths examined his bank passbooks, land records and other documents during the raids.

According to Vigilance directorate, Behera was arrested as he failed to come up with satisfactory accounts of assets worth ₹1.51,73,385 in his possession.

"A case (27) was registered with the Bhubaneswar Vigilance police station against Behera. Subsequently, Behera was arrested and produced before a Special Vigilance Court here that remanded him to judicial custody till September 16, 2020," said a Vigilance source.

CYBER CRIMES UP AS COPS SIT COOL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: The denizens of Capital city have been losing their hard-earned money to the cyber criminals almost every day even as the cops dealing with such cases have turned mute spectators. The cyber crooks have looted around ₹3.50 lakh here in three separate incidents during the last seven days. One victim even alleged his bank staffers' involvement in the fraud as well.

According to sources, three different complaints have been lodged with Kharavela Nagar, Chandrasekharpur and Khandagiri police regarding the cyber frauds of ₹3.50 lakh.

Santosh Kumar Patnaik of Sailashree Vihar lodged a complaint with Chandrasekharpur police alleging that unknown miscreants had duped him of ₹2 lakh on the pretext of some medical emergencies. Patnaik received a WhatsApp call reportedly from



Three different complaints have been lodged with Kharavela Nagar, Chandrasekharpur and Khandagiri police regarding the cyber frauds of ₹3.50 lakh

South Africa with a profile picture of his brother-in-law August 29. During conversation, the person at the other end asked Patnaik to deposit ₹2 lakh in the bank account of one of his friends in Manipur who was suffering from some ailment. Subsequently, he deposited the amount in the SBI account of one Tharmi Zimik.

The fraudsters again called him back and requested to deposit more money in another account. Patnaik

immediately switched off the phone smelling a rat. Later, he dialed another contact number of his brother-in-law and came to know that the previous call was a fake one.

Similarly, one Ashok Kumar Sethi alleged that he lost ₹79,000 when he downloaded a software application from the Google play store Wednesday. Sethi mentioned in his complaint that he contacted the customer care number of Google Pay after he failed to recharge ₹99

on his mobile number. The customer care executive asked him to download the app and submit his account details on the downloaded app to ensure a successful recharge.

Later, he received a message saying withdrawal of ₹79,000 from his account.

In another incident, recently the cyber criminals withdrew ₹72,000 from the account of another victim without his knowledge. Nihar Ranjan Behera of Aiginia under Khandagiri police limits alleged that the cyber criminals withdrew the amount in installments through a different phone number - 7536961903 - that was attached to his bank account without his knowledge. He claimed that some bank officials in collusion with the cyber fraudsters had attached the phone number to his account without informing him.

The lackadaisical attitude of police officials dealing with cyber-crime is said to be responsible for a surfeit in such cases.

State's nCoV tally jumps to 1,16,678



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 4: The state's COVID-19 tally mounted to 1,16,678 Friday with 3,267 people including a ruling BJD MLA, testing positive for the infection, an official of the health and family welfare (H&FW) department said.

Nine more fatalities pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 531, said the official.

The deaths were reported from five districts Bolangir, Cuttack, Ganjam and Khurda districts registered eight fatalities, while one patient succumbed to the virus in Rayagada.

Ganjam district has so far accounted for 199 deaths, followed by Khurda (72). Of the fresh cases, 1,961 were reported from quarantine centres while 1,306 people tested positive during contact-tracing, the official said.

The state government has launched fresh contact-tracing and follow-up measures, said the official. Khurda district topped the list of new cases with 859 infections, followed by Cuttack (384), Puri (235), Rayagada (169), Bhadrak (138) Mayurbhanj (134), Sundargarh (127),

DEPRESSING TREND

Of the 3,267 fresh cases, 1,961 were reported from quarantine centres and 1,306 people tested positive during contact-tracing

Khurda topped the list of new cases with 859 infections, followed by Cuttack (384) and Puri (235)

Nine more fatalities pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 531

GANJAM DISTRICT HAS SO FAR ACCOUNTED FOR 199 DEATHS, FOLLOWED BY KHURDA (72)

Bargarh (120) and Keonjhar (107).

Meanwhile, Basudevpur MLA Bishnubrata Routray, in a social media post, said he has tested positive for COVID-19 and urged all those who came in contact with him to exercise precaution.

"If anybody is found with even the smallest of symptoms, please consult a doctor as soon as possible," Routray said. Meanwhile, 2,980 patients recovered from the viral infection, the H&FW tweeted.

The recoveries included 654 from Cuttack, 263 from Khurda, 212 from Ganjam, 207 from Mayurbhanj, 133 from Sambalpur and 126 from Bolangir. As many as 90,331 people have so far recovered from the disease.

The state has so far conducted over 19.97 lakh sample tests, including 46,754 Thursday.

RAVENSHAW SHUT FOR TWO DAYS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 4: After two employees and a security guard tested positive for COVID-19 in Ravenshaw University here in last 24 hours, the varsity will be shut down for two days beginning Friday. In an order, the university's authorities said that in the larger public interest and with a view to containing the spread of COVID-19, the university will remain closed from September 4 to September 6.

Except for the main entrance, all other gates of the Ravenshaw University campus will remain closed. The employees of the university, who are under home quarantine, are not allowed to move out of their houses till the quarantine period is over, the order stated.

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RETURNEES BRACE UP FOR MIGRATION

Notwithstanding pandemic, middlemen trap them with advances in Sonepur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Sept 4: Nuakhai festival in western Odisha was over August 23, but the Covid situation has not improved a bit for the poor who returned home from other states.

Migrant returnees in Sonepur are bracing up to return to their workplaces in other states as they allegedly failed to avail of sufficient work to make a decent earning during lockdowns and shutdowns.

Reports said, after the coronavirus-induced lockdown was imposed across the country, the district saw a huge reverse migration of migrant workers. Considering their plight over livelihood, the government laid stress on creating job opportunities for them through MGNREGS for their sustenance.

However, it was alleged that most of the migrant returnees had to sit idle because they failed to get adequate work to keep their pots boiling. COVID situation is yet to subside, but many migrants are preparing to go back to their workplaces in different states.

Well before Nuakhai, middlemen and contractors had visited



villages and given migrants advance money to meet their daily expenses. Those who have taken advances are preparing to go back.

Even after the festival, many labour contractors camped in villages luring poor people with advances. Want of work has provided the contractors a golden opportunity to trap the idle workforce.

Like Bolangir, thousands of people from Sonepur migrate to different parts of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, Mumbai, Huderbad and Telangana. The contractors are trying to lure them to brick kilns while the local administration is reportedly worried over this problem. Most of these people work in

brick kilns of Telangana and Tamil Nadu. Besides, young people from these villages have been migrating to work in malls and hotels in Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

Unofficially, over 15,000 migrant labourers had come back to the district during lockdowns, but only 19 had registered their return by the administration. For the last four months, most labourers had allegedly no work even as the administration tried to provide them jobs through MGNREGS. Some said they do not find work according to their skills and expertise.

They are being told to work as manual labourer under MGNREGS.

Most of them are reluctant to work under MGNREGS.

In western Odisha, the migration season usually begins after Nuakhai. After the festival, labour contractors take them away for six months.

Surprisingly, this problem is noticed in Dunguripalli and Binika blocks, even though the two blocks are irrigated.

The situation of migrant returnees in non-irrigated blocks like Tarabha, Sonepur, Birmaharajpur and Ullunda is worse.

According to some migrants, they have run out of money and their life is miserable. Now they have no way but to receive advance from labour contractors to go back to their workplaces, they observed. On the other hand, preparation for migration has put a question mark on the execution of the government schemes at the grassroots level.

As per guidelines, there is a provision of registration of names of labourers at panchayat offices before migrating to other states. There is no data about this with the administration.

Baripada MLA arrested for assaulting ITDA engineer



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 4: Baripada MLA Prakash Soren was arrested following a complaint that he along with his supporters had beaten Ganapati Jena, the executive engineer of the ITDA.

Police registered a case on the basis of the FIR and called the MLA to the police station to inquire about the incident. He was later arrested and produced at SDJM court. He was granted conditional bail.

Terming the incident as a conspiracy against the MLA, BJP workers staged an agitation in front of the police station, blocking a road Friday. The complaint said that the MLA had called the executive engineer to the local circuit house Thursday to ask him about an alleged delay in clear-

ing the bill of a contractor.

Due to his preoccupation, the executive engineer reached the circuit house at 7.30 pm. Thereafter, both of them got into heated arguments. Riled by this, the MLA had allegedly physically attacked him. Then, Soren asked his supporters to beat him up. Then, some of his supporters beat him with bamboo

sticks, the complaint said.

The executive engineer apprised the issue to the Collector, the SP and the PD before filing a complaint against the MLA. The MLA, however, denounced the allegation as motivated, saying he had reprimanded the engineer for delaying the utilisation of MLALAD fund and poor execution of works.

Cop held for ‘raping’ girl on marriage plea

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 4: Tikayatpali police arrested a personnel of Odisha Auxiliary Police Force (OAPF) Friday after his beloved alleged that he raped her on the pretext of marriage.

According to reports, the girl had earlier lodged a complaint at Tikayatpali police station under the jurisdiction of Rourkela police district. She alleged that the accused, Laxman Mundari, was in a relationship with her for over 11 years on the promising of marriage. Later, the complainant came to learn that Mundari was living in with another woman.

Acting on her complaint, police booked Mundari for repeated incidence of rape under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.

On the other hand, the accused cop was arrested and forwarded to a local court.

‘Mystery’ woman breaks silence

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Sept 4: Hours after the late social activist Aditya Dash's mother alleged that a lady from Balasore district used to blackmail her son for marriage, the woman in question refuted all charges and accepted that she was in a relationship with him.

The woman who was tagged by the deceased's parents as 'psycho' appeared before the media Thursday, taking strong exception to the 'mentally unstable' tag. She said her relationship with Aditya was short-lived sans animosity. "Tagging me as a 'psycho lady' is derogatory and I will take the legal course in this regard," she expressed.

She also denied having blackmailed and threatened Aditya

7 held for felling sal trees in reserve forest in Keonjhar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, Sept 4: Forest officials arrested seven people on charge of felling sal trees in Aratei reserve forest under Patana range of Keonjhar Friday. The action of the forest department came a day after Orissa POST reported about the timber smuggling in the area.

"A case has been registered against seven people under various sections of Odisha Forest Protection Act 1972. The accused were produced in court Friday," said Patana ranger Pabitra Mohan Nayak.

Surprisingly, one of the arrested is the president of a village forest protection committee. The accused were identified as Pratap Mahakud (president of the committee), Kanderam Munda, Chhitaaray Munda, Laxman Munda, Makardhwaj Munda, Mana Munda and Tima Munda of Pichhulabeda of Dumuria panchayat.

For a long time, over 500 valuable tim-



ber like sal, dhala, mahula, kusma and jamun trees had been chopped off in the forest, but the department had no clues about it.

The matter came to light when some people were herding goats in the forest Thursday and found so many trees were missing.

About 70 per cent of the trees chopped off in the area are sal trees. The trees were spread over five acres of forest land, even though the forest beat house is two km away at Tanda near Pichhulabeda village.

Locals and social activists had demanded action against the guilty.

Even Pratap Mahakud, the president of the village forest protection committee, himself had termed it as handiwork of some influential people and demanded an investigation into the matter and punishment to the guilty.

It may be noted here that the livelihood of locals depends on the reserve forest as they collect minor forest produce like sal leaves, mahua flowers, firewood, resin and tooth twigs.

DFO Ajit Tripathy had earlier hinted about an investigation into it. Villagers demanded action against the forest officials who have failed to monitor such illegal tree felling in the reserve forest.

Ib power station shuts first unit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lakhanpur, Sept 4: The first unit of the Ib Thermal power station of Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC) at Banharipali in Jharsuguda district was shut down over mechanical issues late Thursday night. With the shutdown, generation of 210MW of electricity has been affected.

The first unit produces 210 MW of electricity. This unit, as per the allegations of some officials and workers, has been developing technical issues on a regular basis as no proper maintenance is being carried out.

Owing to frequent shutdowns, the company is losing revenue in crores. They demanded the state government's



intervention in this regard.

When contacted, the project's information and public relation officer Himanshu Behera said the company is repairing the unit on a war footing basis. In two to three days, it will be functional again. Notably, the Thermal power station has two power generation units: 210MW each and GRIDCO purchases the entire load.

Dish-makers' hammers fall silent

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 4: For hand-made aluminum dishes, Atoper village in this town has earned a name for itself. People from different parts of Odisha were frequent visitors to this village on a daily basis to buy hand-made dishes.

The situation, however, has changed drastically since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown it brought along with it. The hammers of the artisans have fallen silent and the deafening sound created due to the clash of metals has all but disappeared. Sales have also dropped as these days there are not many visitors to the village.

Hand-made dishes are still preferred by many as they help the food retain its unique taste, said artisan Prasanna Sahu.

No doubt the job of making dishes and other kitchen utensils is tedious. The artisans have to sit for hours in front of a glowing oven hammering away on aluminium sheets to give them different shapes.

However, they opined that they do not get the real value of their work and products. They also complained that the lack of raw materials like aluminium



sheets and coal are forcing them to give up the craft they have been indulging in for generations. So many families are switching to other means of livelihood as utensil-making is no longer a profitable proposition. Only some senior artisans continue to ply in the traditional business.

"Despite the scorching heat, we continue to work in front of the oven for lengthy hours. The flames increase the heat manifold. We collect old aluminium from various places. Then we melt them in pots and make aluminium plates. These plates are then given

shape of kitchen wares by striking them with hammers," informed Prasanna. The artisan however lamented the lack of government support for their craft.

Few months back people would come to our villages to buy the dishes. Due to the COVID-19 fear that has stopped also. Now we visit weekly markets in nearby districts and states like Jharkhand to earn our livelihood. The COVID-19 situation has left us nowhere," Prasanna said. "It is high time the government takes notice of our plight and help us," he added.

**EAST COAST RAILWAY
ENGINEERING WORKS**
File No: DRM/Engg/KUR/20-21/
E-Tender/24 Dt.: 31.08.2020
(1) Tender No: e-Tender-SOUTH-KUR-160-2020 Dt.: 20.08.2020
Description : SUPPLY OF 40,000 CUM OF HARD STONE MACHINE CRUSHED BALLAST OF 50 MM SIZE AT SURLA ROAD DEPOT & LOADING THE SAME INTO ANY TYPE OF RAILWAY WAGON FOR KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work : ₹ 518 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 4,03,000/-
(2) Tender No: e-Tender-CENT-KUR-161-2020 Dt.: 20.08.2020
Description : PAINTING OF RAILS, GREASING OF ERCS & SEALING OF LINER CONTACT AREA AND OTHER ENABLING WORKS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER, BHUBANESWAR OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work : ₹ 120.14 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 2,10,100/-
(3) Tender No: e-Tender-CENT-KUR-162-2020 Dt.: 24.08.2020
Description : THROUGH RENEWAL OF EXISTING 2070 NO. OF STEEL CHANNEL SLEEPERS WITH "H" BEAM SLEEPERS INCLUSIVE OF ALL FIXTURES & FASTENINGS OVER BRIDGE NO. 567 (DN) IN BETWEEN BARANG-BHUBANESWAR AND BRIDGE NO. 20,22,32,19,13 AND 18 ON DN LINE BETWEEN BARANG-RAJATHGARH SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER, BHUBANESWAR OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work : ₹ 460.76 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 3,80,400/-
(4) Tender No: e-Tender-CENT-KUR-163-2020 Dt.: 24.08.2020
Description : EXECUTION OF 13.20 KM THROUGH SLEEPER RENEWAL WORK FROM KM. 437.00-450.20 ON DN & MID LINE IN PATCHES BETWEEN BARANG-KHURDA ROAD SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER, BHUBANESWAR OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work : ₹ 311.67 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 3,05,800/-
(5) Tender No: e-Tender-EAST-KUR-164-2020 Dt.: 20.08.2020
Description : IMPROVEMENT OF APPROACH ROAD AT RAHAMA & BADABANDHA STATION.
Approx cost of the work : ₹ 72.67 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 1,45,300/-
Completion period: 12 months (for SL No. 1 to 4) and 08 months (for SL No. 5).
Tender closing date & time : at 1500 hrs. of 16.09.2020 (for all tenders).
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: <http://www.iirps.gov.in>
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager(Engg),
PR-237/LJ/20-21, Khurda Road

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
R.W. DIVISION, ANANDAPUR, SALAPADA, KEONJHAR**
e-Procurement Notice for Road works Identification No. Online- 01/EERW/AND/2020-21
Tel.No.-06731-220387 & 220388 (Office), E-mail address-eerw_anandapur@yahoo.co.in
No. 2608/Dt. 31.08.2020
No.O-318:- 1. Name of the work: Periodical maintenance & special repair to road works for the year 2020-21. 2. Total No. of works: 49 (Forty-nine) Nos. (Percentage rate tender). 3. Estimated cost : Approx. estimate cost 5.05 lakhs to 88.74 lakhs. 4. Class of contractor : 'A' Class, 'B' Class, 'C' Class & 'D' Class. 5. Other details:
Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of tender online for bidding From To Last date & time of opening of tender clarification Date & time of opening of tender : Office of the Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Anandapur Date & place of receipt of bid cost & bid security
1 Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Anandapur 01/EERW/AND/2020-21 07.09.2020 at 10.00 A.M. 22.09.2020 at 5.00 P.M. 21.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M. 23.09.2020 at 11.30 A.M. The bidder shall transfer online at the cost of bid and EMD in column No.4 & 6 in Annexure I, respectively through a process as mention in DTGN.
Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in & www.tenders.ori.nic.in
OIPR-25055/11/0001/2021 Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Anandapur

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BHUBANESWAR**
Ph. No.: 0674-2301787, Fax No.: 0674-2300965, E-mail ID: eerw_bbsr@yahoo.co.in
No. Tender-Online-BBSR Divn.-05
e-Procurement NOTICE
1. Name of the work : Construction / Repair of Road Works
2. Total No. of Projects : 1 No. Individual Project
3. Class of Contractor : 'A' & 'B' Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant Class of other licensing authorities.
4. Estimate Cost of the Project : Rs. 89.30 Lakh
5. Time for Completion : 3 (Three) Calendar Months
6. Other Details :
Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of Tender Online for bidding From To Date & time of opening of Tender
1 Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Bhubaneswar Tender Online - BBSR Divn. - 05 8.9.2020 at 11.00 A.M. 22.9.2020 upto 5.00 P.M. 23.9.2020 at 11.00 A.M. 25.9.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
7. Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
8. Corrigendum if any / shall only be published in the above website.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Divn., BBSR
OIPR-25066/11/0005/2021

SURYO FOODS & INDUSTRIES LIMITED
Dinalipi Bhawan, A-54/1 & A-55/1, Nayapalli, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003, Odisha (India) CIN: L05004OR1989PLC002264
E mail: suryofoods.industries@gmail.com, Website: <http://www.suryofoods.com>
NOTICE is hereby given that the 31st Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Members of SURYO FOODS & INDUSTRIES LIMITED will be held on Tuesday, 29th September, 2020 at 11.00 A.M. at the registered office of the company at Dinalipi Bhawan, A-54/1 & A-55/1, Nayapalli, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751003 to transact the business, as set out in the Notice of 31st AGM. The Annual Report of the Company for the Financial year 2019-20 along with the Notice of AGM has been e-mailed on 04th September, 2020 to the members whose e-mail address have been made available by the Register and Transfer Agent or are registered with the Company and sent by permitted mode on 04th September, 2020 to Members who have not registered their e-mail address.
Members are hereby informed that the notice of the 31st Annual General Meeting and 31st Annual Report of the Company are available on the website of the Company www.suryofoods.com and the Notice & Annual report can be viewed directly on the following links:
<http://suryofoods.com/annualreport>
Click- Annual Report for the F.Y. 2019-20-SURYO FOODS & INDUSTRIES LIMITED
The Notice & Annual Report are also available for inspection at the registered office of the Company on all working days during business hours of the Company.
In compliance with Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Amendment Rules, 2015 and Regulation 44 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirement) Regulations, 2015 Members are provided with the facility to cast their votes on all resolutions set forth in the Notice of the AGM using remote electronic voting system from a place other than the venue of the AGM ('remote e-voting'), provided by Central Depository Services (India) Limited (CDSL) and the business may be transacted through such voting. In order to enable its Members, who do not have access to e-voting facility, to send their assent or dissent in writing in respect of the resolutions as set out in the Notice of AGM; the Company has also enclosed a ballot form with the Notice of the Annual General Meeting. Members can opt for only one mode of voting, i.e., e-voting or ballot form. In case members cast their votes through both the modes, voting done by e-voting shall prevail and votes cast through ballot form shall be treated as invalid.
The e-voting period commences on Saturday, 26th September, 2020 at 10.00 A.M. and ends on Monday, 28th September, 2020 at 5.00 P.M. During this period, Members may cast their vote electronically. The e-voting module shall be disabled by CDSL thereafter.
The voting rights of Members shall be in proportion to the equity shares held by them in the paid up equity share capital of the Company as on 22nd September, 2020 ('cut-off date'). Any person, who is a Member of the Company as on the cut-off date is eligible to cast vote on all the resolutions set forth in the Notice of AGM using remove e-voting or ballot form or voting at the AGM.
In case you have any queries or issues regarding e-voting, you may refer the Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") and e-voting manual available at www.evotingindia.com, under help section or write an email to helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or may call on 18002005533.
The Company has appointed CS. Saroj Kumar Ray, FCS, Sr. Partner of M/s. Saroj Ray & Associates, Company Secretaries, Bhubaneswar-751015, as the scrutinizer to scrutinize the e-voting process as well as voting at the AGM through ballot paper in a fair and transparent manner.
The facility for voting, either through electronic voting system or ballot or polling paper shall also be made available at the AGM and Members who have not cast their vote by remote e-voting shall be able to exercise their right at the AGM. The Members who have cast their vote by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may also attend the AGM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again.
A person who has acquired shares and become a member of the Company after the dispatch of notice of AGM and holding shares as of cut-off date, may obtain the login ID and password by sending a request at www.evotingindia.com. However, if the person is already registered with CDSL for remote e-voting then the existing user ID and password can be used for casting vote.
Every member entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of himself/herself and such proxy need not be a member. Proxies in order to be effective shall be duly completed, stamped (if applicable) and signed and must be deposited at the registered office of the company not less than 48 hours before the time for holding the Annual General Meeting.
Notice is also hereby given that pursuant to section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 the Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Wednesday, 23rd September, 2020 to Tuesday, 29th September, 2020 (Both days inclusive) for the purpose of Annual General Meeting.
**By Order of the Board
For Suryo Foods & Industries Limited
Sd./- Manisha Satapathy
Company Secretary and Compliance Officer**
**Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 04th September, 2020**



If you try to hide something from the Divine you are sure to fall on your nose, plouff! Like that.

THE MOTHER

SMALL STEP, LITTLE RESULT

Transparency or weeding out corruption is a 'theme' with the Modi *sarkar*, and it has been sort of pursuing this goal despite a pushback from the *babus*. Last year, the government endorsed lists of "dozens" of officers of the IRS and IT services accused of corruption, sexual harassment and other charges. The "campaign" continues.

Now, as part of weeding out inefficient and corrupt *babus*, the Modi *sarkar* has again reiterated that Central ministries and departments must constantly update the list of officers who have completed 30 years of service. Besides, the register of officers with 'doubtful integrity' will be regularly reviewed and updated to help identify *babus* who can be prematurely retired from service. Sources say that the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) issued a letter to this effect on August 28.

Apparently, the names of such officers will be forwarded to the respective review committees on a routine basis. Cases about the IAS, IPS, IFS and Railway cadre *babus* will be considered by the respective secretary of DoPT, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs and Central Railway Board respectively. Will corrupt *babus* get the message?

EXTENSION FOR MODY

The Chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Pramod Chandra Mody got his term extended by six months ending February 28, 2021. A retired 1982-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer, Mody was slated to retire on August 31. His predecessor Sushil Chandra (now Election Commissioner) too got an extension in May 2017, which was considered a rare exception at that time. Now, with Mody's continued tenure, it seems to have become a norm.

The virtually last-minute announcement ended the hectic speculations in *babu* circles about the government's plans. Since the beginning of August, the board has been led by two retired IRS officers, Mody and Member Sushil Kumar Gupta. According to sources, there was a keen tussle between the two senior-most *babus* for the top slot. Finally, it appears that the government decided to go with a tried and tested hand than opt for a new face.

Mody's extension also puts paid to the hopes of Seema Khorana Patra and Prabhash Shankar who were next in line in seniority to have a go at the top post.

RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL

Shah Faesal's brush with politics in Jammu & Kashmir turned out to be short-lived. The erstwhile IAS topper had made headlines last year when he announced he was quitting the civil service to protest the situation in Kashmir. He founded a political party Jammu & Kashmir People's Movement (JKPM). Now, more than a year later, he has left his own party and indicated that he would like to return to the Service.

According to sources, the government has not accepted his resignation of January 2019, pending investigation into some of his posts on social media. Apparently, before quitting politics, Faesal contacted top officials in the Home Ministry. If we believe in the rumours, he contacted even National Security Adviser Ajit Doval before announcing his decision.

Those in the know say that since the government has not accepted his resignation, the door is open for his re-entry into the IAS. However, he will have to withdraw his resignation first. The website of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) still shows Faesal as a serving officer, even though he plunged into politics for a year and a half. Since his resignation has not been processed, Faesal can still withdraw it. But more likely, the final say in this matter may be a political one than an administrative decision.

BABUS MUST BE 'KARMAYOGI'

The Modi *sarkar* has now added "Karmayogi" to the government's expanding lexicon of buzzwords. The Union Cabinet has given its approval to "Mission Karmayogi", a skill-building programme for civil servants. It has been touted as the "biggest human resource development reform in the government".

According to C. Chandramouli, Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training, *babus* will have to be "imaginative and progressive, energetic and enabling, transparent and tech-enabled, and constructive and creative" to face modern challenges. But, all that sounds like is a fancier word for good old "training".

Share a *babu* experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@twitter.com](#). Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

If a king is energetic, his subjects will be equally energetic. If he is reckless, they will not only be reckless likewise, but also eat into his works.

CHANAKYA

Don't waste your time with explanations: people only hear what they want to hear.

PAULO COELHO

We live in an age when unnecessary things are our only necessities.

OSCAR WILDE

WORDSWORTH

Throw in the towel

It's from boxing. Or rather, from prize-fighting, which preceded it. When a fighter in a mill (a pugilistic encounter) was doing badly and was obviously going to lose, his seconds would throw something into the ring to indicate they were conceding defeat on his behalf. At the time, the most readily available item was the sponge for wiping the blood and sweat off their man's face. So the earliest form of the expression was to throw up the sponge (occasionally to throw in the sponge), which dates from sometime before the middle of the nineteenth century. A good example is in that Australian classic Robbery Under Arms by Rolf Boldrewood, dated 1888: "But it's no use giving in, Jim. We must stand up to our fight now, or throw up the sponge". The form you give is rather more recent, dating from just after the beginning of the twentieth century. An early instance is in Jack London's story The Mexican, published in the collection called The Night-Born in 1913: "Danny, battered and heroic, still kept coming up. Kelly and others near to the ring began to cry out to the police to stop it, though Danny's corner refused to throw in the towel". People sometimes advise somebody to chuck it in or throw it in as shortened forms, as ways of advising that some activity should cease. The boxing ring is rich in such metaphors. Up to scratch refers to the line drawn on the ground to which boxers were brought for the encounter, to hit below the belt is an illegal act in general life as much as in that sport.

LOL

COOKIES

In a Catholic school cafeteria, a nun places a note in front of a pile of apples, "Only take one. God is watching." Further down the line is a



pile of cookies. A little boy makes his own note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

MAKING THERE, SEELING HERE



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

MANUFACTURING SECTOR IS DOWN, AND THE SOLUTION IS TO INCREASE IMPORT DUTIES SUBSTANTIALLY. THE RESULT WILL BE THAT INDIAN BUSINESS PERSONS AND MNCS WILL NOT KEEP IMPORTING GOODS MANUFACTURED BY THEM IN CHINA TO SELL IN INDIA

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) shrank by 23.9 per cent in the first quarter of this financial year. GDP is a measure of the total amount of production made or income earned by the country. In contrast, former professor of Jawaharlal University Arun Kumar has assessed that there was a 75 percent decline in April 2020, followed by 60 and 40 per cent decline in May and June in GDP leading to a 58 per cent decline in the quarter. I think Arun Kumar's estimates of decline are on the higher side; yet, the decline must be more than the 23.9 per cent said by the government.

The reason for this huge difference in the two estimates is that GDP is basically a guess estimate. It is virtually impossible to measure the production done by every tea shop and farmer. Therefore, statisticians make estimates based on selected data. Selection of data is at their discretion. The data for the first quarter was mostly unavailable due to the lockdown. Therefore, statisticians had to perforce rely on the data that were available. They appear to have relied on the results of corporations, GST collections, sale of fuel oil, rail travels and the like. In this quarter, only a small number of large corporations did well – private electricity distribution companies, mobile telephony, e-commerce and the like. They have announced their results. Businesses not doing well have lessened their frequently of announcing their results. Therefore, these results are unduly influenced by the select corporations. Further, the unorganised sector is entirely left out of this data. Some 95 per cent of the employment and 45 per cent of the GDP comes from this sector. This includes kirana shops, tailors, taxi operators, small schools and doctors. These businesses were worst hit by the lockdown. This hit has not been captured by the government GDP figures.

The government has estimated a 3.4 per cent growth in the agriculture. Arun Kumar says that the arrivals in the mandi were down by 50 per cent in April. I



Philips India won the contract to supply five crore LED bulbs under the government's UJALA scheme. It has supplied bulbs that were 'Made in China'. An increase in import duty would have made it profitable for Philips to manufacture those bulbs in India. Similarly, an across-the-board increase in import duties would make it profitable for businesses to produce in India for the Indian market

have had to myself sell lemons at as less as ₹22 per kilo, against the earlier rate of ₹30-40 per kilo due to the lack of demand in the market. I do not think there is any chance of growth in agriculture because of the decline in the prices. Agriculture is not likely to pull the economy even if we assume that it grew at 3.4 per cent because the share of agriculture in the nation's GDP is only 14 per cent. Thus, a 3.4 per cent growth in agriculture translates into a paltry 0.24 per cent growth in the GDP.

The situation of Medium Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs) is no better. The total credit given by the banks to them in March was ₹11.49 lakh crore. This fell in April and May and then inched back to ₹11.32 lakh crore in June. The total credit extended in June was less than that was extended in March despite the ₹3 lakh crore additional lending package announced by the government. This means that the banks have recy-

cled the regular loans and shown them as fresh landing under the package.

The loans given for vehicles have shown the lowest decline of 0.5 percent between March and July 2020 according to RBI. This too should not be considered as an indicator of stability. The property sector has similarly shown a nominal decline of 0.7 per cent in the loans extended. But I know of builders who are in great difficulty due to absence of demand and they have borrowed to tide over the problems. These loans are like oxygen given to a patient while waiting for surgery. The overall situation is grim.

The International Monetary Fund has suggested that the government push exports and integrate our economy even more deeply with the world economy to overcome the present crisis. This is exactly what we have been doing for the last six years and our GDP has been falling in the last four of these six years. We must

think again.

Globalisation has turned on its head today. Indian businessmen are taking their money to countries like China where there is freedom to pollute the environment, where labour laws are virtually non-existent and where bureaucracy is corrupt but helpful. They, along with Multinational Corporations, are producing goods in China and importing them into India. This is beneficial for them because they can produce cheap goods and destroy those Indian businesspersons who try to produce in India. This is also beneficial for those consumers like the government employees who have a secure income, because they get cheap goods. However, this is harmful to the domestic industries that close down due to cheap imports and workers who lose their jobs. This is also harmful for the government because it gets less of revenues because of the closing down of domestic businesses.

The solution is to increase import duties substantially. The result will be that Indian businesspersons and MNCs will not be able to import goods manufactured by them in China and sell in India.

The increase in businesses in India will lead to generation of employment, increase in demand in the market, and encourage businesses to make more investments. However, those having secured incomes like the government employees will be losers. They will have to buy more expensive Made in India bulbs. Indeed, the general public will also not get cheaper Made in China bulbs. However, their loss will be ten times compensated by the increase in incomes due to the generation of jobs.

The choice before the government is to either secure the interests of MNCs and Indian business persons manufacturing in China and government employees; or to secure GDP growth, jobs and more revenues. The government should wholly reject the advice of IMF and embrace protectionism.

The writer is formerly Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore.

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Stagnant growth and high inflation

It's a fall or new beginning. The nation is pondering over the minus 23.9 per cent GDP crash. The figures are stark but life goes on. Does the GDP really matter? The lockdown has plunged India into a never-before crisis. The GDP slump now is likely to worsen to full-year economic contraction of 7 per cent – or simply negative seven per cent; massive for a country of 130 crores that wants to take a super leap.

This is the result of routinely jettisoning financial stability for myopic adjustments in government expenditures, says Viral V Acharya, former RBI deputy governor. Now, the growth is prescribed on government spending by the RBI. Good. Nobody has answered from where the government would bring in the precious money. The gold pawning by the Chandrashekhar government in 1990 caused a similar concern. Then the growth clocked one per cent. Again, the figures have meant not much for the nation. Post-1992 Budget, some companies did exceedingly well at the stock market. It led to exposure of the billion-dollar Harshad Mehta scam. Banks and financial institutions were denuded. The corrective steps were taken, SEBI was formed but

Shivaji Sarkar

THE GDP ITSELF IS NOT A BIG NUMBER BUT ITS RAMIFICATIONS ARE. IT IS A SYMPTOM. THE DISEASE IS SEVERE – NOT THE COVID-19 BUT FINANCIAL FAILURES-2019

As a first, the RBI has to assert itself and instead of suppressing interest rates on savings, it has to increase it to a minimum of 9 per cent for bank deposits, else the banks would collapse

the banks continue to take the hit.

The RBI is eloquent. It says even in a year of crisis that began in August 2019, bank frauds jumped to 159 per cent involving ₹1.48 lakh crore for public sector banks and ₹3421 crore for private ones. During the last 30 years, the GDP swung up and down but the common man not only in India, and even in the US and Europe post-2008 sub-prime crisis, lost several billions. The insurances and mutual funds emerged as more dishonest. Nations churn out big concerns; hopes and jingoism across the world keep people busy.

The US economy shrinks by -31.7 per cent, the British by -20.4 per cent and the fall guy China by -6.2 per cent. Pakistan, with scant containment, is clocking at least 1.03 per cent growth. India, many might say is in league with the big nations. May be it is in a better position with free food grain doles being

given to 80 crore people. That is indeed a silver lining. It is also true that since these 80 crore are not part of the market as they do not generate demand. The job losses, salary cuts or its non-payment, starvation, and rising number of suicides to four a minute have led to a grim situation. But, the fall in industrial output to 38.1 per cent, services to 20.6 per cent, and manufacturing to 39.3 per cent, may not theoretically have hit them.

India has notionally spent ₹150,471 crore for free rice and wheat. The overflowing stocks in FCI silos were paid long back and do not entail a financial burden. Actual hit to the exchequer as of now is ₹1,930 crore for transportation and another ₹5,000 crore for pulses. The immediate cost is ₹6,930 crore. But as the stocks are depleting, carrying out the operation beyond November or till the West Bengal polls would burden criti-

cal finances.

Gross value added (GVA), which is actual production value, minus taxes, contracts by 22.8 per cent. Even the public administration, defence and other service sub-sectors record a 10.3 per cent fall in government spending. Gross fixed capital formation, in short investment, contracts 47.1 per cent. However, government consumption expenses have grown by 16 per cent, much due to inflation. Even nominal GDP has contracted by 22.6 per cent. It means the base of tax collection, as the GST controversy depicts, will shrink.

The GDP itself is not a big number but its ramifications are. It is a symptom. The disease is severe – not the Covid-19 but financial failures. As a first, the RBI has to assert itself and instead of suppressing interest rates on savings, it has to increase it to a minimum of 9 per cent for bank deposits, else the banks would collapse.

Life will go on but to become a global leader we need a minimum 8 per cent continuous growth for \$5 trillion economy. The central bank has to delineate the path. Disease or not, the nation has to take a vow that it would not jeopardise normal functioning ever again. INFA

Nesco, cheques

Sir, In the name of customer-friendly services, Nesco utility has put the customer grievances section in cold storage. The bill payment mode through cheque has been prohibited after some employees were found engaged in wrong practices. Some officials are under suspension but even months after this also, Nesco is not able to resume payments through bank cheques, or by way of cheque-drop at the box in its main offices. To add to the woes, it has also stopped manual bill collection through its staff, citing one or other reason. There is a large segment that prefers regular payment on a monthly basis. Instead of punishing a few staff for their cheque manipulations, such a complete ban for long-term is not a good step. The discom, for the last many years, has not been able to provide bill in Odia language, although such a system has been implemented by other discoms. The replacement of China meters, despite repeated directions from OERC, is perhaps a game to help someone else to monopolise this field. The bill collections by manual mode must be restored immediately.

Janaki Ballav Dash, MAYURBHANJ

Covid, students

Sir, The impact of Covid-19 on the education system is widely felt. Children are separated from their peers and teachers, and are deprived of socialising activities, including participation in sports, for fear of corona. The United Nations Children's Agency has said that at least a third of world's kids can't access remote learning as the Covid-19 pandemic has forced the schools closed, creating a global education emergency. Nearly 1.5 billion children are affected by school closure. At least 463 million of these children have no remote learning facility. Their education is completely disrupted for months.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, JAJPUR

Bank loans, SC

Sir, The Supreme Court directing banks, that standard accounts that have not been declared non-performing assets (NPAs) as on August 31 should not be declared NPAs till further orders, must cheer the industry. The direction followed an assurance from bankers that no account shall become NPA at least for a period of two months. The court is also examining the question of whether compound interest should be charged on loans deferred during the moratorium period. It must be noted that the pandemic has left thousands of workers jobless, and loan repayments are difficult for them now.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

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

School paints village walls for outdoor classes

Since most of the families lack resources to educate their kids digitally, we had to come up with an innovative method to keep children invested in education

RAM GAIKWAD | TEACHER

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Solapur, Sept 4: Out on a street in a Maharashtra village, half a dozen children gather around their teacher who points a stick at the diagrams on a wall, one of many murals in the neighbourhood being used to help poor students keep up with their education during the pandemic.

With schools shut since March in a COVID-19 lockdown, teachers in Nilam Nagar became concerned that some youngsters would fall behind because their families cannot afford an Internet subscription for online classes.

So they came up with a workaround – children like playing on the streets, so they would take their lessons outside.

“Since most of the families lack resources to educate their kids digitally, we had to come up with an innovative method to keep children invested in



In this August 27 picture, Kalidas Chavdekar, a teacher of Aasha Marathi Vidyalay, points to a painting on the wall of a house to teach students in Solapur.

education,” Ram Gaikwad, a teacher at Aasha Marathi Vidyalaya school, told AFP on the eve of Teachers’ Day.

The outdoor classrooms for a total of

1,700 students aged between six and 16 have been a hit.

Every day, small groups gather at the painted walls in alternate lanes in

the village of more than 30,000 people, sitting or standing as they take notes.

Their teachers walk through the village each weekday morning, stopping to explain the lesson or answer any questions. The murals cover a vast range of subjects – from writing to trigonometry – in English and the local Marathi language.

On one sun-faded wall, illustrations of objects starting with the letter ‘S’ – including a scooter, spade and swing – are painted in black below the words ‘look, listen and say’.

“When my mother sends me to buy milk, I walk through the village and look at the lessons on the walls,” 13-year-old Yashwant Anjalakar told AFP.

The son of two factory workers – who hopes to work for the elite Indian Administrative Service one day – said the walls are the only option for students like him who lack access to the Internet.

“I miss my school and my friends a lot. Sitting at home is boring and these walls are a great way of revising and studying ... I want to keep studying even during this pandemic.”

So far, 250 walls in the village have been painted by a local artist, and the school hopes to commission another 200. Parents have chipped in to help with the project’s cost, which has reached Rs 150,000 so far, said the school’s principal Tasleem Pathan.

“The entire village is invested in keeping the children educated during the pandemic,” Pathan told AFP.

India has the world’s third highest tally of virus infections, with more than 3.7 million confirmed cases, behind the United States and Brazil.

Despite a strict lockdown, the pandemic has shown no signs of slowing down as it moves from cities into the country’s rural interior:

Unease in Bihar’s ruling alliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 4: Former chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi’s HAM(S) Friday reignited its rivalry with the Lok Janshakti Party, warning it will field candidates against LJP if Ram Vilas Paswan’s party puts up nominees to take on the JD(U) in the Bihar assembly polls, reflecting the unease in the state’s ruling alliance.

The LJP, founded by Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, is a BJP ally but not part of the JD(U)-BJP coalition government in the state where assembly elections are due in October-November.

The party, now helmed by Paswan’s MP son Chirag, has often been critical of the Nitish Kumar government over a variety of issues ranging from alleged corruption in the public distribution system, to road construction and violation of prohibition laws.

There have been media reports that the LJP was unhappy over the return of the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) into the NDA fold and contemplating fielding candidates against JD(U) nominees.

Dalits, who roughly constitute around 16 per cent of the state’s voters, form the bedrock of support for both the LJP and HAM(S), and some amount of jostling between the two parties for greater share in the electoral pie appeared inevitable after Manjhi’s return.

“It doesn’t matter who is happy or unhappy (over HAM’s return). We have come here to strengthen the hands of Nitish Kumar and not for tickets to contest elections. We will



THE BJP HAS SO FAR KEPT ITSELF AWAY FROM THE FEUD, AND INSISTED THE ALLIANCE WILL CONTEST THE POLLS AS A COHESIVE UNIT

be forced to open our mouth if Chirag Paswan continues to issue threats like he will put up candidates against JD(U) nominees. If that happens, we too will field our candidates against LJP,” HAM(S) spokesperson Danish Rizwan said.

The LJP’s state parliamentary board is meeting September 7 and there are indications that it would discuss the issue of “friendly contests” with the JD(U).

Chirag has often voiced unhappiness over the functioning of the Nitish Kumar government and said his alliance is with the BJP.

When there were murmurs in the BJP with a section wanting someone from the party to replace Kumar as the next chief ministerial face, before the then saffron party

chief Amit Shah quietened them with his statement declaring the NDA will go to the hustings under the JD(U) leader, Chirag had said it will go by the BJP’s decision.

It is learnt that Kumar and Chirag have not spoken to each other in a long time.

Notwithstanding the LJP president’s strained relations with the JD(U) and HAM(S), the BJP is happy about Manjhi’s return to the NDA.

“It is now clear that in the assembly elections there will be only two habitually corrupt and traditionally dynastic parties against the NDA. This will help people decide who will pursue development with justice and whose intention will be to get land parcels registered in their name in re-

VOICES OF DISCORD

■ With Dalits constituting a significant chunk of the electorate, Jitan Ram Manjhi has often clashed with Paswan’s party. The two had bickered even before the 2014 general elections for a larger share of tickets. Manjhi was then a part of the NDA and the JD(U) a constituent of the grand alliance

■ HAM(S) has support among ‘Mushar’ voters. They are a ‘Mahadalit’ community, which has a substantial population in the state where ‘Paswans’ are numerically strongest and the most influential among a plethora of Dalit castes

■ The LJP believes Nitish Kumar wooed back Manjhi to counterbalance Paswan’s party

turn for favours,” Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi tweeted in Hindi.

He was referring to alleged transfer of huge tracts of land to the family of RJD president Lalu Prasad in return for favours when he was the railway minister. Lalu’s son and leader of the opposition in the state assembly Tejashwi Yadav is also an accused in the case being probed by the CBI.

JD(U) leader and Information and Public Relations Minister Neeraj Kumar also welcomed Manjhi to the NDA fold, saying it was in the state’s interest and result in the RJD-led alliance getting wiped out in the assembly polls. The RJD had drawn a blank in the last Lok Sabha elections.

Maha village offers window into India’s surging Covid caseload

Spurt in cases in small towns and villages, where mask-wearing and social distancing have nearly vanished and community gatherings are back, explains why India’s infections are now rising faster than anywhere else in the world

REUTERS

Rajewadi, Sept 4: The quaint, sugarcane-growing village of Rajewadi in Maharashtra did not have a single confirmed coronavirus case until mid-August. Now, one in every four people there is positive for the virus, with police blaming a local religious event for the spread.

Such spurts in cases in small towns and villages, where mask-wearing and social distancing have nearly vanished and community gatherings are back, explain why India’s infections are now rising faster than anywhere else in the world and why the country is soon set to top 4 million cases. Cases are accelerating in towns, villages and smaller cities while the situation has stabilised in big metropolises of New Delhi and Mumbai.

The World Health Organisation has said India’s relatively low mortality rate could rise as the virus fans out to the vast countryside, where health facilities are basic at best.

In Rajewadi - a small village of around 360 - authorities launched widespread testing only after an elderly resident was found to have died of COVID-19 August 17, said Aniruddha Athalye, a senior health official in Satara district.

Since then, 91 people there have tested positive and the village has



been sealed off by police. Government officials, police and residents said days before the death - the village’s only fatality from the disease - the person and about 30 others had gathered one night to offer prayers to a local deity. They had dinner together after the rituals, and throughout the function no one wore masks or practiced social distancing. Police said almost all those who attended have tested positive. Police have lodged a complaint against the organiser for violating the state’s epidemic act.

A person who saw the function but did not attend said “everyone was behaving like coronavirus

In April and May, people were following all the rules but now the mentality has changed. They have become casual and are taking coronavirus lightly

SUBHASH CHAVAN | CIVIL SURGEON

won’t catch them.”

He declined to be named while police investigate the case. The village is now barricaded, with a poster describing it as a containment zone. Sanjay Bhosale, a village grocery shop owner whose son has contracted the virus, said residents had grown tired of the virus rules and started visiting each other like before.

Kangana, Maha leaders in no holds barred verbal war

AS A HUGE ROW SNOWBALLED, AN EMBARRASSED BJP WHICH OPENLY SUPPORTED KANGANA TILL THURSDAY, DISTANCED ITSELF FROM THE ACTOR’S REMARKS ON MAHARASHTRA AND MUMBAI POLICE



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 4: A no holds barred verbal war erupted Friday between Maharashtra’s political parties and actress Kangana Ranaut for her recent statements that are viewed as denigrating the state in general and the Mumbai Police in particular.

Top leaders from the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance of Shiv Sena, Nationalist Congress Party, Congress, and opposition Maharashtra Navnirman Sena, slammed Kangana for her remarks, while protests erupted in Mumbai and other cities against the actress.

As a huge row snowballed - in which Kangana dragged the Palghar Sadhu lynching incident, labelled Mumbai as “addicted to blood,” dared the Maratha Pride of Maharashtra, alleged the existence of an “Islam-dominated” Bollywood, besides POK - an embarrassed Bharatiya Janata Party, and some of its leaders who openly supported Kangana till Thursday, abruptly dumped her like a hot potato.

Amid protests by Shiv Sena activists, burning Kangana’s effigy in the city and suburbs, Thane, Palghar, Pune, Aurangabad, Nashik and other cities, strong reactions from various quarters, the normally calm state Home Minister Anil Deshmukh (NCP) was ruffled enough to “strongly condemn” Ranaut’s statements, albeit without taking her name.

“I strongly condemn allegations levelled by an actress on Maharashtra and Mumbai Police forces. Our police forces are brave and capable in executing their duties and maintaining law and order across the state. Whoever doesn’t feel safe here has no right to live here,” a grim Deshmukh said.

Senior minister Anil Parab termed Kangana’s outbursts as “a conspiracy intended to shift Bollywood out of Mumbai” and said such attempts will not be tolerated. On the other hand, advisor to CM Kishore Tiwari has alleged that Kangana is attempting to carve a political niche in the BJP by cre-

ating herself as an alternative to the party’s leaders like Smriti Irani and Hema Malini.

In a sharp critique, Congress spokesperson Sachin Sawant accused Kangana of acting as the “mouthpiece” of the BJP’s IT Cell, by which they have insulted the 13 crore people of Maharashtra, the 106 martyrs who sacrificed themselves for the state and Queen of Jhansi, Rani Laxmibai.

“Devendra Fadnavis (Leader of Opposition) and MLA Ram Kadam are her mentors. If Kangana has information about drug peddlers, why doesn’t she inform the central agencies? Why Sandip Singh made 53 calls to the BJP leaders must be probed,” Sawant said.

Caught unaware by the storm building against the 33-year-old actress from Himachal Pradesh, the BJP suddenly backtracked and washed its hands of the Kangana controversy. “Kangana should not try to teach Mumbai, Mumbaikars and Maharashtra. Sanjay Raut should not attack us through Kangana Ranaut. The BJP has nothing to do with Kangana. Don’t link us to her statements,” BJP leader Ashish Shelar virtually implored.

Besides political leaders such as state Congress President and Minister Balasaheb Thorat, Mumbai Congress chief Eknath Gaikwad, Sena MPs Sanjay Raut, Arvind Sawant and Priyanka Chaturvedi, several Bollywood and Marathi film personalities such as Urmila Matondkar, Riteish Deshmukh, Renuka Shahane and many others have attacked Kangana for her comments.

Ticket-seekers violate protocols to meet Lalu

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ranchi, Sept 4: Former Bihar Chief Minister and RJD president Lalu Prasad Yadav, who is serving a jail term, has been allegedly holding durbars at the official residence of the Director of Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Ranchi, Jharkhand, where he has been shifted.

One can find RJD leaders roaming around the official residence of the RIMS Director everyday. They were reportedly sending their biodata to the RJD president through the security guards. The Bihar Assembly poll dates are likely to be announced in the second week of September.

The Ranchi jail administration

tried to restrict the visitors but the RJD leaders were openly violating the protocols and jail manual.

According to a security guard deployed at the RIMS Director’s residence, “RJD leaders have been told not to speak to media persons. They will be denied tickets if their photos are published in the media for meeting Lalu Yadav.”

The RJD leaders have adopted new tactics to beat the Covid protocols in Jharkhand.

The Ranchi administration had lodged an FIR against Tej Pratap, the eldest son of Lalu, for violating Covid-19 protocols. Tej Pratap did not follow the 14-day mandatory quarantine. Two days ago, the Ranchi district administration sent RJD Legislator Mamta Devi to 14-

day quarantine along with some RJD leaders who met Lalu.

A PIL has been filed by lawyer Manoj Tandon via online mode. Manoj said Lalu Prasad Yadav has been allocated the bungalow of the RIMS Director which is a violation of the jail manual and asked the court to send Yadav back to Hotwar jail.

Lalu, who has been sentenced to imprisonment in different cases in the fodder scam, was lodged at the Birsia Munda jail located at Hotwar. However, for treatment of various ailments, Lalu Yadav has been admitted in the paying ward of the RIMS. He was shifted to the bungalow after a few security guards and nursing staff were found coronavirus positive.



Students stand in a queue to enter an examination centre before appearing in the JEE (Main) entrance exam amid the coronavirus pandemic in Patna, Friday.

Nitish under attack over unemployment



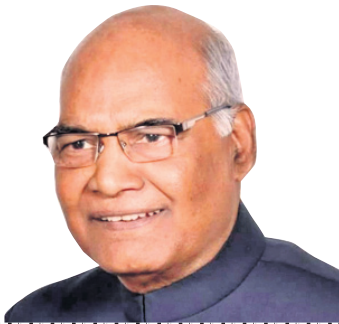
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Sept 4: Tejashwi Yadav, leader of opposition in Bihar, Friday again attacked CM Nitish Kumar over unemployment and migration of labourers.

In a tweet, Tejashwi said: “Bihar CM Nitish Kumar will get red faced whenever you ask him about unemployment and migration of labourers. He has no answers after destroying two generations of people of Bihar.”

“Bihar turns out to be the centre of unemployment in India. Old industries are shut down in Bihar and new companies are unable to open their facilities...,” Tejashwi said. His elder brother and former health minister Tej Pratap Yadav said in a tweet that Nitish Kumar and the BJP are responsible for unemployment in the state.

Retaliating to the RJD and the Congress’ attacks, Sushil Kumar Modi, deputy CM of Bihar, said: “The Congress had ruled for 45 years in Bihar since Independence and 10 years with the help of the Lalu-Rabri government. Still they have not achieved anything on the economic front. During their tenure, shortage of man power, capital, talent and mass migration of the people of Bihar was high. Why are they not talking about it the election campaign?”



The changing times call for new methods of pedagogy that may help us equip our younger generation, to learn, explore and contribute more efficiently to the society. I hope that we continue to be guided by our sagacious teachers and build a future of this great nation

RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

18 IEDs DEFUSED

Security personnel have detected and defused 18 Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) suspected to have been laid by members of the banned CPI (Maoist) outfit in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district, police said Friday



of the day quote

A good foundation in the early years gives the next generation a better start. Educated and healthy people with a good foundation in the early years contribute to the financial and social wealth of their societies

M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT



Assam government is preparing a standard operating procedure (SOP) to implement the directives of Gauhati High Court on adherence to COVID-19 protocol issued by the health department

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM MINISTER



The Centre must dispatch seven CRPF battalions, which were sanctioned for the state in 2018, for deployment to strengthen the fight against Naxal menace

BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CM



SHORT TAKES

Covid patient commits suicide

Jabalpur: A 64-year-old COVID-19 patient allegedly committed suicide Friday by jumping off the second floor of a hospital in Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, police said. He was undergoing treatment for the infection in the super specialty wing of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Medical College and Hospital, Garha police station Inspector Rakesh Tiwari said. "He was admitted five days ago. He jumped out of a window without grills and died instantly," Tiwari said.

Man ends life

Amaravati: In a shocking incident, a man hanged his five-year-old daughter and later committed suicide in Chittoor town of Andhra Pradesh Friday, police said. Ganesh had checked into a lodge along with his daughter on Thursday night. He hanged his daughter in the bathroom before hanging himself in the room. According to police, Ganesh made a video clip before taking the extreme step as he had failed to get the child's custody from his former wife. Ganesh said in the video clip that he had a love marriage but he took divorce due to his wife's extramarital relations.

Eleven injured

Palghar: At least 11 persons were injured in a head-on collision between a state transport bus and a container truck in Palghar district, an official said Friday. The accident took place at Vakadpada village on Vikramgad-Wada road Thursday, the official from the Maharashtra State Transport Corporation said.

NATION CAN COUNT ON US: NARAVANE

General Naravane said that he reached Leh Thursday morning and spent time with the commanders and troops to make a first-hand assessment of the situation along the borders



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Leh, Sept 4: Indian Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane Friday said that the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is tense and the force is prepared for all contingencies. "The nation can count on us," said General Naravane who was on two-day visit to Ladakh where he also met troops deployed at forward locations along the LAC. "The situation along the LAC is tense. We have undertaken precautionary deployment in some areas. The troops are prepared for all contingencies that may arise. All these actions have been carried out only along the LAC," the Army Chief said. General Naravane said that he reached Leh Thursday morning and spent time with the commanders and troops to make a first-hand assessment of the situation along the borders. Indian Army chief returned to Delhi Friday. "It was very satisfying to see our soldiers and local commanders in

high morale and good health. It gives me confidence that they are well prepared to safe guard the territorial integrity of our nation," said General Naravane, adding that Indian Army is known for its commitment and resolve. He pointed out that over the past three months, both India and China have been engaged in resolving the situation. "Military and diplomatic channels are functioning. The Indian side is firmly committed to resolve the current situation along the LAC through engagement," he said. General Naravane said that India will continue to utilise all existing mechanisms to reduce tension and to ensure that the status quo is not unilaterally changed. He went to Ladakh after China made fresh incursion attempts and Indian Army thwarted there acts. Chinese's People Liberation Army (PLA) troops had made fresh incursion attempts in India territories along south of Pangong Tso (Lake) on August 29 and again on August 31.

TACKLING TERRORISM Women cops can play big role: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Sept 4: Women police personnel can engage with mothers of children in Jammu and Kashmir to prevent the youngsters from taking the "wrong path", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, while lavishing praise on the people of the union territory, hit by the menace of terrorism. Addressing the 2018 batch of IPS probationers at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy here through video conferencing, he also cautioned them not to indulge in wrongdoings and said they would be exposed by the latest technologies, which are also useful in better policing. Responding to a woman probationer, Modi heaped praise on the people of Kashmir, saying they are 'lovely' people and have special ability to learn new things. "I am very connected to these people. They treat you with so much love...All of us together, we have to work to-



wards stopping the children from taking a wrong direction." And this can be done by our women police officers efficiently. Our women force can effectively work in educating the mothers and bringing back those children. I am confident if you do that, in the initial stage itself we can prevent our children from getting into the wrong path," Modi said. He was apparently referring to youngsters being radicalised and made to join terror groups in Jammu and Kashmir. The Prime Minister also stressed on con-

stability intelligence for effective policing. Nowadays technology plays an important role in crime detection, be it CCTV footage, mobile tracking...it helps you in a big way. But, the same technology is also responsible for suspension of police personnel nowadays...., Modi warned. The way technology is helpful it is also becoming a cause of misbehavior (difficulty)...and police are subjected to it more, he added. He further said the police officials need to train people to see how technology can be used to its maximum.

stabulary intelligence for effective policing. Nowadays technology plays an important role in crime detection, be it CCTV footage, mobile tracking...it helps you in a big way. But, the same technology is also responsible for suspension of police personnel nowadays...., Modi warned. The way technology is helpful it is also becoming a cause of misbehavior (difficulty)...and police are subjected to it more, he added. He further said the police officials need to train people to see how technology can be used to its maximum.

Recoveries cross 30L-mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: India's total COVID-19 recoveries crossed the 30 lakh-mark Friday, taking the recovery rate to over 77 per cent, the Union Health Ministry said Friday, asserting that the figures show that the number of patients recovering is steadily rising. One of the goals of the 'Test-Track-Treat' strategy of the Centre is to reduce COVID mortality and keep the case fatality rate low, the ministry said in a statement. There has been sharp attention on sustaining high levels of recoveries and to strengthen the clinical treatment protocols to provide a uniform standardised level of medical care to save lives, it said. "Not only is India's case fatality rate lower than the global average and progressively declining (current figure is 1.74 per cent), but a very small proportion of active cases,



amounting to less than 0.5 per cent, are on ventilator support," the ministry said. Data also shows that two per cent cases are in ICUs and less than 3.5 per cent of the active cases occupy oxygen supported beds, it said. As a result of these measures, India's total COVID-19 recoveries crossed 30 lakh (30,37,151) on Friday. With the recovery of 66,659 patients in the last 24 hours, India has continued its trajectory of post-

ing more than 60,000 recoveries for the eighth consecutive day, the ministry said. The recovery rate amongst COVID-19 patients is 77.15 per cent demonstrating that the number of patients recovering is steadily rising over the past several months, it said. The higher number of recoveries has also led to a steady enhancement in the difference between the recovered and active cases, and this difference has crossed 22 lakh, as on date. This ensured that the actual case-load of the country (8,31,124 which are under active medical care), has reduced and currently comprises only 21.11 per cent of the total positive cases. The total number of COVID-19 cases mounted to 39,36,747, while the death toll due to the disease climbed to 68,472 with 1,096 people succumbing to it in a day, the ministry's data updated at 8 am showed.

FARM WORK



Farmers working in a field in Agartala, Friday

UNI PHOTO

5 OF FAMILY FOUND DEAD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dahod, Sept 4: A couple and their three minor daughters were found dead at their residence in Dahod town of Gujarat Friday, police said. Police suspect it to be a case of suicide. Saifuddin Dudhaiwala (42), his wife Mahejabeen (35) and daughters Arava, Zainab (both 16) and Husaina (7) were found dead in their apartment in Sujai Baug area in the morning, inspector of Dahod town police station, H P Karen, said. "Preliminary probe suggests that the deceased may have consumed poison-laced water or cold drink sometime between Thursday evening and Friday morning," he said. The bodies were found by Dudhaiwala's elderly parents, who returned home in the morning after their overnight stay at a relative's place, the official added. According to Saifuddin's father Shabbir, his son may have taken the drastic step due to financial problems, Karen said.

BRAVING ODDS Man travels 1,200 km to take wife to exam centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gwalior, Sept 4: Rains and potholed roads were no deterrence for a Jharkhand man who drove over 1,200 km on a scooter, with his pregnant wife sitting pillion, so that she could appear for an exam for aspiring teachers here in Madhya Pradesh. The tribal couple, Dhananjay Kumar (27) and his wife Soni Hembram (22), travelled on the two-wheeler from Ganta Tola village in Godda district of Jharkhand to reach Gwalior, a centre for DEd (Diploma in Education) exam, required to be cleared by those wanting to take up teaching jobs. The wish to see his wife become a school teacher inspired Kumar to undertake the arduous journey, covering more than 1,200 km across four states, braving rains and bad roads in the midst of COVID-19-enforced lockdown. "As trains, buses and other means of transport were not available, we decided to traverse the journey by road on our two-wheeler, Kumar said Friday. "My wife, who is pregnant, was initially reluctant to take this arduous journey. But after seeing my determination, she agreed for this long journey," he said. The couple arrived here on August 30 for D.Ed exam being con-

ducted by the MP Board of Secondary Education. The examination will continue till September 11. As a video of the couple and their journey taken by some newsmen went viral on social media, the district administration stepped in to help them. "If I had hired a taxi for coming to Gwalior, it would have cost Rs 30,000 which was a big amount for me. Whatever little jewellery we have, we mortgaged it to raise Rs 10,000. "So far, we have spent Rs 5,000 on our one-way journey and on a room that we have taken on rent in Deendayal Nagar here, Kumar, who has studied till Class 8, said. "We started off on August 28 morning and enroute stayed a night each in Muzaffarpur (Bihar) and Lucknow to reach Gwalior on our scooter, said Kumar, who was working as a cook with a caterer before he lost his job three months ago because of lockdown. "Earlier I thought that it won't be possible for me to appear in this examination but after seeing my husband's determination and courage, I got ready for this long journey." We faced a lot of trouble due to rains. I got mild fever enroute, but now everything is okay. I will apply for teaching job in Jharkhand and I am sure I will get selected, Soni, who got married to Kumar in December, last year, said.



Representational Image

WAR AGAINST VIRUS

IGI to get India's first on-site Covid test lab

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: To test incoming international passengers, the country's first on-site Covid testing facility is coming up at the capital's Indira Gandhi International Airport and will provide RT-PCR test results within six hours. The facility, to be set up by a private laboratory empanelled by the Delhi government for Covid testing, is expected to be operational by mid-September. Genestrings Diagnostic Centre, which will establish the 3,500 square metre facility at the multi-level car parking of Terminal 3, said that the results of samples collected at the facility will be declared within 4-6 hours, and

until then, the passengers will be isolated in the waiting lounge or may opt to stay in a hotel. In case of a positive result, the passenger concerned will be processed in line with applicable Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) protocols by the authorities while those testing negative can continue their onward air journey, it added. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare guidelines mandate international passengers arriving in India and having RT-PCR negative certificate would be exempt from institutional quarantine by states and will be allowed onward air journey. The government, in an advisory issued in August, mandated that incoming travellers may seek ex-



emption from institutional quarantine, if they have a negative report from a RT-PCR test conducted within 96 hours before the journey. Genestrings Diagnostic Centre Director, Rajat Arora, said that the facility would ensure incoming passengers from abroad who could not arrange for a report on their Covid status can get it at the first airport

upon reaching India. Besides, residents of Delhi may choose to get tested at the airport laboratory and wait for the results before entering the city, he added. "This is the first time such an arrangement is coming up at any airport in the entire country. We will test the incoming passengers at the airport, and the reports will

be ready within 4-6 hours, which will ensure that they are tested before entering the city as well as for onward journey. RT-PCR is a gold standard way of testing for Covid-19 and will be a game-changer for the safety of incoming passengers. We are very proud of this collaboration and will ensure a successful implementation," he added. The testing facility and infrastructure at T3 has been readied by Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), a joint venture of corporate firms and the Airports Authority of India handling operations, management, and development of the IGA since 2006, with all the necessary audits and approvals from the governing bodies.

of the day quote

We will defeat the Trinamool Congress both through the EVMs and ballots. Trinamool knows it will be defeated. That is why the TMC is scared and the state government not willing to hold elections

DILIP GHOSH | BJP'S WEST BENGAL UNIT PRESIDENT

Kejriwal's announcement about AAP workers going around Punjab villages with oxymeters further exposed their desperation to woo the people of our state, where they have no political standing left

AMARINDER SINGH | CHIEF MINISTER OF PUNJAB

In the SP govt, Brahmins and Dalits were oppressed selectively. Now in the present BJP govt, along with them, there is a lot of oppression of Muslims as well. They are being framed in false cases, which is very sad

MAYAWATI | BSP CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

2 brothers killed in mob attack

Jalna: A mob beat to death two siblings and injured their brother and mother in Jalna in Maharashtra on Friday over an old dispute, police said. The incident took place in Panshendra village, said an official. "On August 18, while celebrating Pola, those part of the mob and the family had an altercation. Both sides had approached police at the time. On Friday, the dispute flared up again, leaving brothers Rahul and Pradeep Borde dead."

Man killed in tiger attack

Canning (WB): A fisherman was killed by a tiger in West Bengal's Sundarbans Friday, a forest officer said. The incident comes a day after a crab-catcher was killed in a tiger attack in Marichjhapi Island in the forested region. Six men from Parghumti village in Hingaljanj police station area in North 24 Parganas district were catching fish in a canal in Bagna forest range when suddenly a tiger leaped on one of them, identified as 40-year-old Munna Gazi, and dragged him into the forest, the officer said.

SPARROW system in J&K

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday launched the Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) system for Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officers at the Raj Bhavan here. The technological intervention is going to benefit around 1,289 officers and is aimed at bringing more transparency, avoiding loss of appraisal reports during transition, ensuring better monitoring and timely completion of performance appraisals, an official spokesman said.

Over nine kg heroin seized

Amritsar: Over 9-kg heroin was seized by the Border Security Force (BSF) troops along the India-Pakistan border in the Amritsar Sector Friday, a statement said. It said 9.6-kg heroin was found hidden inside nine packets. The BSF officials said the vigilant troops of the force once again thwarted the attempt of anti-national elements to push the consignment of contraband items into India from across the border.



The humane side of the police force in the country has come to fore during the pandemic

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

HOME DELIVERY OF 'PRASAD'

The management of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine said Friday that it has arranged home delivery of 'Prasad' to devotees throughout the country



PANDEMIC WOES

MPs to give Covid -ve report for Parl session

The COVID-19 test of the MPs need to be done 72 hours before the start of the session and it can be done either in their constituencies or at the Parliament complex

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: Members of Parliament (MPs) will require COVID-19 negative reports of themselves, their family members and other close contacts to attend the upcoming monsoon session, beginning September 14.

According to detailed guidelines issued by the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha secretariats, the close contacts of MPs include personal assistant (PA), personal secretary (PS), driver and maid.

"In case a member is found to be negative, she/he can attend the session.... In case a member is found positive, she/he will have to go for institutional isolation/hospitalisation as per advice of doctor and as per patient/clinical management protocol," according to the guidelines. The guidelines further say for safety purposes, MPs' family and staff members can undergo COVID-19 test on the Parliament premises as well. If a family member of an MP or PA/PS/driver/maid is found COVID-19 positive, then the parliamentarian is in high risk zone and has to go for quarantine for 14 days from



the last day of their contact. Besides this, the secretariats of both houses in the nine-page guidelines have also emphasised on wearing mask, maintaining physical distance of six feet, keeping hands clean during the session. Staff members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha secretariats will also undergo COVID-19 test, which is going to be started from Saturday.

Thousands of masks and gloves, hundreds of sanitiser bottles and face shields, touch-free operation of doors, and COVID-19 tests for an estimated 4,000 people including MPs and staff members -- several arrangements have been made for the 18-day session that would be

held under the shadow of a pandemic for the first time ever. Frequent sanitisation of the entire Parliament complex will also be carried out, while arrangements have been made to sanitise various parliamentary papers as well as footwear and cars of MPs, officials said. Frisking of people will also make way for touch-less security scanning, while thermal scanning will also be totally touch-free.

The first-of-its-kind monsoon session will see Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha sitting in two different shifts, while special seating arrangements have been made for MPs in adherence to social distancing guidelines.

Bar Council of Delhi to examine Bhushan's case



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: The Bar Council of India (BCI) has asked Bar Council of Delhi to examine the conviction and fine of Re one imposed on activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan by the Supreme Court in a contempt case and take a legally-mandated decision with regard to his rights as a lawyer.

The Bar Council of a state grants license to a person to practice as a lawyer and has wide powers such as suspending or taking away the right of its members in certain situations to practice under the Advocates Act.

"The General Council of the Bar Council of India has unanimously resolved to direct the Bar Council of Delhi, where Prashant Bhushan is enrolled as an Advocate, to examine the matter and proceed as per law and rules to decide the same as expeditiously as possible," the BCI said in its resolution. Bhushan on Monday was fined one rupee as punishment in the contempt case. A bench headed by Justice Aruna Mishra

Senior advocate Prashant Bhushan was held guilty of contempt by the Supreme Court and awarded ₹1 as fine on August 31

(since retired) had convicted Bhushan for his two tweets against the judiciary. As a punishment he was directed to deposit the fine with the Supreme Court registry by September 15, failing which he would have to undergo three-month jail term and debarment from law practice for three years.

The apex bar body said it deliberated upon the the apex court judgment in its general council meeting held September 3 and held that the tweets and statements made by Bhushan and the SC judgment need thorough study and examination "in the light of the statutory duties, powers and functions conferred on it under the Advocates' Act and the rules framed thereunder".

TOP COURT DENIES BAIL TO SAJJAN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 4: The Supreme Court Friday declined to grant bail to former Congress leader Sajjan Kumar in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case.

A bench comprising Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and comprising Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian said the appeal against conviction will be heard after the top court resumes physical hearing. "This isn't a small case," observed the bench, as it rejected Kumar's bail plea citing medical grounds.

The top court also declined to allow him to remain in hospital noting that his medical reports establishes he does not need hospitalisation. Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for Kumar, submitted before the bench to consider the bail plea on the merits as the High Court verdict was faulty. Singh argued that witnesses' deposition was reversed in the trial court and High Court.

The bench said that bail cannot be granted, adding that neither the argument of faulty judgement of the High Court justifies it nor he needs hospitalisation. Senior advocate H.S. Phoolka, representing victims, opposed Singh's arguments stating that Kumar is getting adequate attention in connection with his health. In May, the top court had refused to grant bail to Kumar stating that his medical report from AIIMS has no ground for hospitalisation. In March, the top court had directed Kumar to appear before an AIIMS Board, which would determine whether he needed hospitalisation.

FUN TIME



Kids enjoying horse riding at the historical Ridge Madan in Shimla

UNI PHOTO

Cong attacks govt over job issues

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: The Congress Friday hit out at the government over the issues of unemployment and poverty and alleged that its intent behind providing jobs to youth was not sincere.

It also alleged that in spite of "collecting crores from the sale of forms for recruitment", especially in SSC and Railways, the government was yet to hold some exams and in a few cases, declare results even after months. Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi attacked the government over a media report which claimed that the unemployment rate has gone up in August

as rural jobs dipped.

His sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also slammed the government over the alleged rise in unemployment and privatisation. She raised the issue of Staff Selection Commission Combined Graduate Level Exams allegedly being in a state of limbo. "2017- No appointments till now under SSC CGL. 2018- Even results are not out of the CGL exam. 2019 - CGL exam was not held. 2020 SSC CGL - No vacancies taken out," Priyanka said in a tweet in Hindi.

"If vacancies come out, then no exams. If exams take place, then no results. If results come out, then no recruitment," she said. "The future

of the youth is being ruined by private sector layoffs and a halt on government recruitment, but the government is serving lies in advertisements and speeches to hide the truth," Priyanka tweeted with the hashtag 'stop privatization'.

In a tweet in Hindi, Rahul appealed to the Narendra Modi government for "employment, reinstatement, results of exams". "Provide solutions to the problems being faced by the youth of the country," he wrote. Congress spokesperson Gaurav Vallabh at a virtual press conference alleged that the government's intent towards the youth was not sincere and was doubtful.

Parole, furlough not absolute right: MHA to states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said Friday the release of prisoners on parole and furlough is not an absolute right and should be on the basis of well-defined norms of eligibility, and directed states that those involved in terrorism and other heinous crimes should not be allowed to go out of jails.

In a communication to all States and Union Territories, the home ministry also said that parole and furlough may not be granted as a matter of routine and may be decided by a committee of officers and behavioural experts keeping in view all relevant factors, especially for inmates sentenced for sexual

offences, serious crimes such as murder, child abduction and violence.

The communication came following reports from different parts of the country that many of those released from jails due to the coronavirus pandemic were indulging in crimes.

The video of a recent incident in Punjab where a girl bravely fought against two armed snatchers, who were also released from a prison recently, was widely circulated on the social media. Referring to the Model Prison Manual, 2016, the home ministry said prisoners whose immediate presence in the society may be considered dangerous or otherwise prejudicial to public peace and order by the District



Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police should not be considered for release.

Prisoners who are considered dangerous or have been involved in serious prison violence like assault, outbreak of riot, mutiny or escape, or who have been found to be instigating serious violation of prison

discipline as per his or her annual good conduct report should not be eligible for release. Prisoners convicted for heinous offences such as dacoity, terrorist crimes, kidnapping for ransom, smuggling of commercial quantity of narcotic and psychotropic substances and such prisoners who in the opinion of the District Magistrate and the District Superintendent of Police may not report back to the prison after completion of the furlough period and should not be released.

It is, therefore, important for state authorities to review their guidelines to ensure that the facility and concession given to inmates, by way of parole, furlough and premature release, etc., with the intention of providing them relief

and rehabilitation, is not abused and misused by them and their advantage does not turn into disadvantage and nuisance for the society at large. The home ministry suggested that following provisions may be included in the guidelines:

- Grant of parole and furlough to those offenders, whose release may have adverse impact on the security of the State or safety of individuals, may be strictly restricted.
- Parole rules of States, including the criteria, duration and frequency may be reviewed after making an assessment based on their experience about the benefits and detriments of such parole.
- Parole and furlough may not be granted as a matter of routine and may be decided by a committee of

officers and behavioural experts, who may meet as per requirement, keeping in view all relevant factors, especially for inmates sentenced for sexual offences, serious crimes such as murder, child abduction and violence.

iv) It may be useful to invariably include an expert psychologist criminologist, correctional administration expert as a member of the Sentence Review Board and in the committee which decides grant of parole and furlough to inmates and obtain their opinion before such temporary release. The home ministry also drew the attention of the States and UTs to some extracts of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, known as 'The Nelson Mandela Rules'.

33% Covid beds in Delhi occupied by 'outsiders'

As per the sources, the Delhi govt has 14,000 beds



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 4: With the number of Covid cases rising in the country, patients from the outskirts were coming to Delhi for treatment to avail of better facilities, claimed Delhi government sources.

As per the sources, the Delhi government has 14,000 beds, nearly 4,500 were occupied of which 1,500 (nearly 33 per cent) were occupied by those who were not Delhi residents.

Delhi government sources said that close to 70 per cent beds were still vacant. Only three of the 131 Covid hospitals (private and government) were full. There's no shortage of beds right now. But the increasing number of patients from outside Delhi was a cause of major concern.

While ICU beds in a few top

private hospitals were all occupied -- Max Saket, Max Patparganj, Indraprastha Apollo and Fortis Vasant Kunj -- over 70 per cent of these patients were from outside Delhi, government sources added. With 83,341 fresh coronavirus infections in the last 24 hours, India's tally mounted to 39,36,747 Friday while the toll climbed to 68,472 with 1,096 more fatalities, said the Health Ministry.

Of the confirmed cases, 8,31,124 were active cases, while 30,37,151 have recovered from the virus till now. With 66,659 recoveries in a day, the recovery rate has increased to 77.15 per cent. The number of patients recovering was on a steady rise over the past several months. As the daily recoveries increase, India has registered more than 60,000 recoveries each day, eight day in a row.

of the day quote

My administration will sanction Chinese officials responsible for human rights abuses in Tibet, and step up support for the Tibetan people



JOE BIDEN | DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

I pledge to make the necessary arrangements for convening the Palestinian Central Council as soon as possible



MAHMOUD ABBAS | PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT

There are those (France) coming from thousands of kilometers away for bullying, claiming rights, and playing the role of a guardian angel. These are unacceptable. They will go where they have come



HULUSI AKAR | TURKISH DEFENCE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Pak PM's top aide resigns

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's top aide Lt Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa resigned Friday after allegations that he used his offices to help family set up several off-shore businesses. Former Pakistan Army spokesman Bajwa, who also served as Commander of the Southern Command, rejected the allegations against him and resigned as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on information and broadcasting. However, he would continue working as chairman of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority.

Deadly heat wave to hit California

Los Angeles: A dangerous heat wave is expected to hit Southern California this weekend with an increased serious risk of wildfires, the US National Weather Service said. "Dangerously hot conditions this Labor Day weekend over southwest California. Temperatures may reach all time highs. Heat illness can kill," the National Weather Service Los Angeles tweeted. It urged people to check in on loved ones who are especially vulnerable, such as the very young, very old, outdoor enthusiasts and workers.

Cleveland officer shot dead

Cleveland (US): A Cleveland police officer has died after being shot, a second person had died and authorities Friday were seeking the person or people responsible, officials said. The shooting happened about 10 p.m. Thursday on the city's west side. Police Chief Calvin Williams told reporters that the officer who died was with the department for 25 years, saying: "Cleveland lost one of its finest." The officer's name wasn't immediately released.

5.0-magnitude quake hits Japan

Tokyo: An earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale struck Japan's Fukui prefecture Friday, although no tsunami warning was issued. According to the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA), the tremor occurred at 9.10 a.m., with its epicentre at latitude of 36.1 degrees north and a longitude of 136.2 degrees east, and at a depth of 10 km, reports Xinhua news agency. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damages.



Any attempt to distort the history of the CPC or vilify its nature and objectives, to distort or change the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics will be resolutely opposed by the Chinese people

XI JINPING | CHINESE PRESIDENT

CHINA LAUNCHES REUSABLE EXPERIMENTAL SPACECRAFT

China has successfully launched a reusable experimental spacecraft, the official news agency Xinhua reported Friday



Covid vaccine for all unlikely until mid-2021

None of the candidate vaccines in advanced clinical trials so far has demonstrated a "clear signal" of efficacy at the level of at least 50% sought by the WHO



REUTERS

Geneva, Sept 4: The World Health Organization does not expect widespread vaccinations against COVID-19 until the middle of next year, a spokeswoman said Friday, stressing the importance of rigorous checks on their effectiveness and safety.

None of the candidate vaccines in advanced clinical trials so far has demonstrated a "clear signal" of efficacy at the level of at least 50% sought by the WHO, spokeswoman Margaret Harris said.

Russia granted regulatory approval to a COVID-19 vaccine in August after less than two months of human testing, prompting some Western experts to question its safety and efficacy.

US public health officials and

Global nCoV cases surpass 26.2mn

WASHINGTON: The overall number of global coronavirus cases has surpassed the 26.2 million mark, while the deaths have increased to over 867,000, according to the Johns Hopkins University. As of Friday morning, the total number of cases stood at 26,208,690 and the fatalities rose to 867,219, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed in its latest update. The US accounted for the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 6,149,265 and 186,785 respectively, according to the CSSE. Brazil came in the second place with 4,041,638 infections and 124,614 deaths. In terms of cases, India ranks third (3,853,406).

RAJNATH BATTS FOR REGIONAL PEACE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, Sept 4: Peace and security in the SCO region demands a climate of trust, non-aggression, respect for international rules and peaceful resolution of differences, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Friday, seen as an indirect message to China which is engaged in a festering border row with India in eastern Ladakh.

In his address at a ministerial meeting of the Shanghai

Cooperation Organisation (SCO) here in the Russian capital, Singh also referred to the Second World War and said its memories teach the globe the "foibles of aggression" of one state upon another that brings "destruction" to all.

Both India and China are members of the SCO, an eight-nation regional grouping which primarily focuses on issues relating to security and defence.

"Peaceful stable and secure region of SCO member states - which

is home to over 40 per cent of the global population, demands a climate of trust and cooperation, non-aggression, respect for international rules and norms, sensitivity to each other's interest and peaceful resolution of differences," Singh said.

He made the comments in the presence of Chinese Defence Minister Gen. Wei Fenghe.

Meanwhile, Indian and Chinese troops are engaged in a bitter standoff in multiple places in eastern Ladakh for four months.

Portland suspect shot dead by cops during arrest

AGENCIES

Portland, Sept 4: Police have shot dead a man suspected of fatally shooting a right-wing activist during protests in the US city of Portland in Oregon state, officials have said.

The victim, Michael Reineohl, 48, was being investigated for the killing of Aaron Danielson, a supporter of President Donald Trump during last weekend's tension in the city, the BBC reported.

A warrant for Reineohl's arrest was issued and he was located by agents Thursday in Lacey, Washington about 193 km north of Portland. Thurston County Sheriff's Lieutenant Ray Brady said it was not clear why the suspect was in Lacey and he did not believe Reineohl lived at the address.

Lieutenant Brady said the police were conducting surveillance when the suspect left the apartment and got into a vehicle in the road.

"There was a confrontation between the officers that were on scene and the subject. The information we have at this time is that the subject was armed. There were shots that were fired into the vehicle and the subject fled from the vehicle, at which time there was additional shots that were fired," the BBC quoted Lieutenant Brady as saying.

According to the BBC report, Reineohl was a regular participant in Portland's anti-racism demonstrations and was part of the protesters' security team that aimed to protect demonstrators from potential agitators.

Several hundred protesters gathered in Portland following the shooting on Thursday and one sign in the street outside a police station.

'FLYING' ELECTRIC SPEEDBOAT DEBUTS ON SWISS LAKES

REUTERS

Lucerne (Switzerland), Sept 4: The world's first electric-powered hydrofoil speedboat, which reduces energy consumption and noise - as well as sea sickness - by "flying" above the waves, has made its debut on Switzerland's lakes.

The Candela Seven can hit speeds of 55 km per hour when its foils lift it out of the water. Its manufacturers say it travels further and smoother than other electric boats.

The foils reduce water friction - and the effect of waves slamming into the boat - cutting energy



consumption by 80% compared to normal diesel-powered boats and extending the craft's range to 90 km (56 miles).

The carbon fiber boat also carries an on-board computer which automatically adjusts the foil positions 100 times per second to

reduce rolling and sea-sickness.

"Because we don't have any waves hitting, we don't have any slamming or bumping around and you really have a quiet a smooth ride," Swiss importer Christian Vogel told Reuters.

Until now, electric boats have tended to sacrifice either speed or range because of the capacity limits of their batteries.

The Candela Seven made its Swiss debut on Lake Lucerne this week, with Candela Speed Boat hoping to drum up new business with a European tour. The Stockholm-based company has delivered 16 boats since last year.

BACK TO SCHOOL



Students wearing protective face masks walk out of a primary school in Wuhan, Hubei province, China

REUTERS PHOTO

Pak fails to get two Indians named in UNSC terror list

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, Sept 4: Pakistan's attempt to get two Indian nationals on the UN Security Council's (UNSC) terrorist list through a proposal was blocked by top member countries including the US, France, the UK, Germany and Belgium, leaving Islamabad's efforts hollow.

Pakistan's Foreign Office expressed its regret over the decision of the UNSC, insisting the need to de-politicisation of the UN sanction regime.

"Pakistan has always stressed the need for de-politicization of the transparency in the UN sanctions regime for its effectiveness and credibility," said Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri.

"These Indian nationals are wanted criminals in Pakistan for their involvement in many high-profile terrorist attacks and are currently residing in India under state protection," he added.

Pakistan had proposed designation of two Indian nationals Gobinda Patnaik and Angara Appaji, be designated under the UNSC's Islamic State of Iraq and Levant and Al Qaeda Sanctions List in 2019.

Pakistan's attempt to get two Indian nationals on the UN Security Council's terrorist list through a proposal was blocked by the US, France, the UK, Germany and Belgium

However, Islamabad's proposals were blocked by the five countries under the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee with the reason that enough evidence was not provided against the Indian nationals by Pakistan.

But Pakistan believes that it provided enough evidence to enlist these individuals as designated terrorists.

"Pakistan had provided sufficient evidence to the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee including information about financial support, travel record and training camps established by this Indian terrorism syndicate to foment terrorism and instability in Pakistan," Chaudhri said.

"Pakistan would continue to expose Indian sponsorship of ter-

rorist entities such as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Jamat-ul-Ahrar and others."

Pakistan also took the opportunity to remind the UN of what it claimed as clear violations of the world body's Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Code of Conduct of Law Enforcement Officials, by the government of India in relation to the ongoing tense situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

"No illegal Acts, such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and Public Safety Act (PSA), can provide a legal cover to a crime recognized as such by international law," said Foreign Office spokesman.

"Pakistan and the people of Kashmir reject Indian attempts to impose illegal and unilateral decisions in Illegal Indian Occupation in Jammu and Kashmir against the wishes of the majority."

"The international community must take cognizance of the series of illegal Indian decisions and actions taken since August 5, 2019 and act in support of the human rights of the Kashmiri people," he added.

NATO agrees Novichok used on Navalny, demands probe

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, Sept 4: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg Friday condemned the "appalling assassination attempt" on Russian Opposition politician Alexei Navalny and called on Moscow to answer questions about the poisoning to international investigators.

Navalny, a Kremlin critic and corruption investigator, fell ill on a flight to Moscow August 20 and was taken to a hospital in the Siberian city of Omsk. He has been in an induced coma in a Berlin hospital since he was flown to Germany for treatment

more than a week ago.

German authorities have said that tests showed that he had been poisoned with a chemical nerve agent from the Novichok group. British authorities previously identified the Soviet-era Novichok as the poison used on former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter in England in 2018.

"There is proof beyond doubt that Mr. Navalny was poisoned using a military-grade nerve agent from the Novichok group. The use of such a weapon is horrific," Stoltenberg said after chairing a meeting of NATO ambassadors during which Germany briefed its allies on developments.

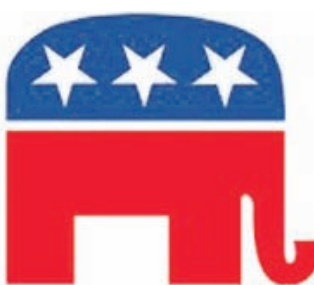
US ELECTION 2020

'2mn Hindus key voting bloc in swing states'

PRESS TRUST INDIA

Washington, Sept 4: The two million Hindus in the United States are a vital and key voting bloc in several swing states this presidential elections; Indian American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi said as he told fellow community members that it was their dharma to exercise their franchise.

In his virtual key note address at the formal launch of the "Hindu Americans for Biden", Krishnamoorthi, who is the three-time Democratic Congressman from Illinois, urged his community members to vote for Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and his Indian American running mate Kamala Harris November 3.



"I feel it is so important to elect Joe Biden because of a Hindu value 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (entire world is a family) a core tenant of Hindus - we believe in treating everyone with dignity and respect," he said.

"It is an old saying in Washington

DC, which is, if you don't have a seat at the table, you're on the menu. And none of us on this zoom call or our families, or communities, or Hindu Americans as a whole can afford to be on the menu, and neither can our agenda. That's why it's so important that you vote," he said.

"This year is the most important election of our lifetime before us. In 60 days, November 3rd, believe it or not, the two million Hindu, Americans in this country will be a vital and key voting bloc in several swing states. Not only Florida, but Virginia and Pennsylvania and Michigan and Wisconsin, and the list goes on and on. It is our duty, indeed it is our dharma to vote," Krishnamoorthi said.

"Voting is our Dharma, and it's at the heart of our society," said Amit Jani, Biden Campaign National AAPI director.

Moderating the launch event, Niki Shah, co-state director of New Jersey, South Asians for Biden, said that hate crimes and acts of vandalism have increased in the last

three and half years and that it was unacceptable.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under President Donald Trump, hate crimes against Hindus have tripled, Shah said.

Rajesh Patel, spokesperson, Maninagar Swaminarayan Temple Kentucky, gave a brief presentation on the vandalism of the temple. "We, as mandir folks, had never experienced anything like this (hate crime at a mandir)," he said.

This is for the first time that two major political parties have made specific outreach efforts towards the Hindu Americans. While the Trump camp has created the "Hindu Voices for Trump" campaign, Biden camp launched the "Hindu Americans for Biden" campaign.

of the day quote

We uphold the need for long-term regulatory roadmap and infrastructure development for the benefit of automobile industry. It is time the country also focuses on alternative biofuel technologies such as that of ethanol, methanol, LNG, and so on

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

India's exports as well as imports are showing positive trends. The exports are approaching last year's levels, after making a sharp dip in April this year due to the pandemic

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

It (govt asking major ports to use locally built tug boats) is a step towards bolstering the revival of shipbuilding and a big move towards Aatmanirbhar Shipping in India. The government will try to create an ecosystem for shipbuilding, ship repair, ship recycling and flagging in India

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | SHIPPING MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

GoAir to add over 100 flights

Mumbai: Budget carrier GoAir Friday announced the addition of over 100 new flights in its domestic network, including from its base Mumbai besides other cities such as Delhi, Bangalore and Chennai, starting September 5. The airline, in a release, also said it expects the capacity to reach 45% of the pre-COVID-19 level by September 21 and by October 15 to 60% of what it was operating prior to the emergence of the pandemic in the country.

New record for Kharif sowing

New Delhi: Sowing of kharif (summer) crops touched a new record at 1,095.38 lakh hectare so far in the current season on the back of good rains and timely pre-positioning of crop inputs, according to the agriculture ministry. Sowing of rice still continues while sowing of pulses, coarse cereals, millets and oilseeds is almost over. The final sowing figures for the current kharif season will be closed October 2, it said.

BHEL sets up biz devt group

New Delhi: State-owned engineering major BHEL Friday said it has created a new vertical 'Make in India (MI) Business Development Group' as part of efforts to focus on Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiatives. The company has taken various steps towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat that include floating an Expression of Interest inviting global manufacturing companies to leverage BHEL facilities and capabilities to set up a manufacturing base in India as well as take up efforts towards indigenisation of major imports.

OYO India offers leave extension

New Delhi: Hospitality firm OYO India Friday said it is offering its employees who are on leave with limited benefits, the option to voluntarily separate or extend the leave for another six months. In April, the company asked some of its staff in India to go on leave with limited benefits from May 4 for four months and also asked all employees in the country to accept a cut in their fixed salaries by 25% due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality industry.



Unfavourable FTAs are playing havoc on competitiveness of India's automobiles and component exports and the government must put this high on the agenda to fix it while negotiating trade agreements

PAWAN GOENKA | MD AND CEO, M&M

Cos raise record \$31 bn equity capital in shrinking economy

Reliance Industries' \$7 bn raising in June was India's largest, as the company turned net debt-free and is now looking to expand its consumer business following the acquisition of Future Group's retail arm

REUTERS

Mumbai, Sept 4: Indian companies have raised a record \$31 billion in equity capital in 2020, Refinitiv data showed, as banks strengthen their balance sheets to prepare for future economic uncertainty and corporates tap into the elevated global liquidity levels.

The record raising comes despite India's economy contracting 23.9% in the June-quarter, year on year, which puts it on track for the first annual contraction since 1980.

The rush of deals though has not been extended to initial public offerings (IPOs), which have fallen to a five-year low to be worth just \$1.5 billion, in the eight months year to date, the data showed.

Banks have been the most active issuers, raising \$13.68 billion, followed by the energy and power sector with \$7.05 billion, and consumer products with \$3.41 billion.

Reliance Industries' \$7-billion raising in June was the country's largest, the data showed, as the company turned net debt-free and is now looking to expand its consumer business following the acquisition of Future Group's retail arm.

Real estate companies were identified by corporate advisors as the most likely candidates to tap the markets further in 2020 as property demand is expected to return after the disruption caused by the coronavirus crisis.

Surging cash levels - helped by \$15



We expect issuance to expand further to growth capital in the coming weeks and months, and the pipeline is developing across sectors

RAVI KAPOOR | INDIA HEAD, BANKING AND CAPITAL MARKETS, CITIGROUP

trillion of stimulus made available for economies to withstand the fallout of the pandemic was primarily responsible for the raising rush, advisors said.

"We expect issuance to expand further to growth capital in the coming weeks and months, and the pipeline is developing across sectors," said Citigroup's India head of

banking and capital markets Ravi Kapoor.

EY India partner Sandip Khetan said the banks' raisings helped created "a cushion to the potential losses on account of credit losses" that could occur in the future. Foreign appetite to buy Indian equities has rose sharply, with investors outside India buying \$10.3 billion of new shares in the three months to August, the Refinitiv data showed.

"The interest from foreign investors has been very strong and that reflects the fact that the quality of issuers that have come to market have been from the Top 100 companies," said Morgan Stanley's executive director Samarth Jagnani.

US unemployment rate drops to 8.4%

AGENCIES

Washington, Sept 4: The US unemployment rate dropped to 8.4% in August with the addition of over 1.4 million new jobs, a latest monthly report said Friday, reflecting that the world's biggest economy, which was severely hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, is on its path to recovery.

The report, released by the Department of Labour, also said that in August, the unemployment rate declined by 1.8 percentage points to 8.4%, and the number of unemployed persons fell by 2.8 million to 13.6 million.

Both the measures have declined for four consecutive months but are higher than in February, by 4.9

percentage points and 7.8 million, respectively, the Bureau of Labour Statistics said.

These improvements in the labour market reflect the continued resumption of economic activity that had been curtailed due to the coronavirus pandemic and efforts to contain the disease, it said.

In a statement, Tim Murtaugh, Trump 2020 communications director, said the 1.4 million jobs added in August are 2.5 times the number of jobs created in any single month of the entire Obama-Biden administration, driving the unemployment rate down again.

In just four months, more than 10.6 million jobs - nearly half of the jobs lost to the pandemic - have already been recovered.



RBI revises priority sector lending norms



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 4: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Friday released its revised priority sector lending guidelines wherein the credit limits have been raised for farmer producer organisations, renewable energy and for health infrastructure.

As announced by the RBI Governor, startups have been brought under the ambit of priority sector lending. Bank finance of up to ₹50 crore has been included as a fresh category under priority sector, an RBI statement said.

The RBI statement said that a higher credit limit has been specified for Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs) or Farmers Producers Companies (FPCs) undertaking farming with assured marketing of their produce at a pre-determined price. Further, "loan limits for renewable energy have been increased (doubled)" and "credit limit for health infrastructure (including those under 'Ayushman Bharat') has been doubled".

'AUTO INDUSTRY EAGERLY AWAITS GST REDUCTION'

Covid-19 battered auto industry awaits GST rate reduction and scrappage scheme announcement to tide over these testing times said Kenichi Ayukawa, MD & CEO, Maruti Suzuki India. He spoke at the 60th SIAM Annual Convention which was held virtually



SILVER LAKE EYES STAKE IN RELIANCE RETAIL: REPORT



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: US private equity firm Silver Lake Partners is said to be in talks to invest \$1 billion in the retail arm of Reliance Industries at a valuation of roughly \$57 billion. An international daily reported that the company is looking to sell about 10% of Reliance Retail. "Silver Lake is in talks to invest about \$1 billion in Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Retail," it said, citing sources.

Reliance and Silver Lake did not immediately respond to e-mails sent for comments.

After monetising Jio Platforms - which houses the firm's telecom arm and digital ventures, richest Indian Mukesh Ambani is looking to rope in investors in the retail business. Last week, Reliance acquired the retail and logistics businesses of Future Group for ₹24,713 crore to boost its retail vertical. Silver Lake was the first US private equity firm to invest in Jio after tech giant Facebook took a 9.99 per cent stake in the company for ₹43,573.62 crore. Silver Lake bought 2.08 per cent in Jio in two tranches for a total of ₹10,202.55 crore. Rival private equity groups KKR, Vista and General Atlantic followed Silver Lake to take stakes in Jio. Other notable investors included Google and Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth fund Mubadala.

Commenting on the report, CLSA said the \$57 billion valuation for Reliance Retail is 15% lower than the value it had assigned for the company.

Moody's downgrades deposit ratings of 4 PSBs

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 4: Moody's Investors Service Friday downgraded the long-term local and foreign currency deposit ratings of Bank of Baroda, Bank of India, Canara Bank and Union Bank of India to Ba1 from Baa3.

The ratings agency also downgraded Baseline Credit Assessments (BCAs) of all the four lenders to B1 from Baa3.

The outlook on the ratings of the four banks is negative.

It affirmed Punjab National Bank's (PNB) long-term local and foreign currency deposit ratings at Ba1 and its BCA at B1 but changed its ratings outlook to negative from stable.

Deepening economic slowdown exacerbated by the coronavirus outbreak will strain the standalone credit strength of the banks, the agency said in a release.

Prolonged financial stress among households, weak job creation and a credit crunch among non-bank financial companies will lead to a rise in non-performing loans, delaying the ongoing clean-up of banks' balance sheets, it said.

On Bank of Baroda (BoB), Bank of India (BoI), Canara Bank and Union Bank, it said, "The BCA downgrades take into consideration rising risks to the banks' asset quality as a result of the severe economic contraction, which will result in an increase in credit costs."

This increase in credit costs will hurt profitability and also strain the banks' modest capitalisation, reversing recent improvements, it said.

The agency however, said funding and liquidity continue to be key credit strengths given their status as public sector banks, which



Deepening economic slowdown exacerbated by the coronavirus outbreak will strain the standalone credit strength of the banks, said the agency

results in good deposit franchises.

The banks' Ba1 long-term local and foreign currency deposit ratings incorporate three notches of uplift from their B1 BCAs to reflect Moody's assumption of a very high probability of support from the government in times of need.

The agency further said the affirmation of PNB's Ba1 long-term local and foreign currency deposit ratings, which incorporates a three-notch uplift for government support from its B1 BCA, reflects its expectation that deteriorating asset quality and profitability will weigh on its capitalisation.

However, PNB's financial metrics had been improving prior to the economic slowdown, which combined with its good funding and liquidity mitigates the negative impact on its credit profile of deteriorating asset quality and profitability, it added.

Moody's said the negative outlook factors in further downside risks to the banks' financial profiles because of the country's uncertain operating environment.

VODA-IDEA BOARD APPROVES ₹25K CR FUND-RAISING PLAN

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 4: Beleaguered telecom operator Vodafone Idea Friday approved plan to raise up to ₹25,000 crore through a combination of equity and debt instruments to keep the company afloat.

The crucial decision came days after the Supreme Court directed telecom operators to pay 10% of total adjusted gross revenue (AGR)-related dues this year, and rest of the payments in 10 installments, starting next fiscal year.

The fund-raising will throw a lifeline to cash-strapped VIL, which has suffered massive losses, as it has been losing subscribers and average revenue per user (ARPU), and faces outstanding AGR dues of about ₹50,000 crore.

In a filing Friday, Vodafone Idea said its board has approved raising of funds through a combination of equity and debt instruments and that the total fund-raising will not exceed ₹25,000 crore.

The company will consider fund-raising through GDR, ADR, FCCB, debentures or warrants.

The fund-raising plans are subject to shareholders' nod and other statutory approvals.

Raising of funds will be through "issue of equity shares or securities convertible into equity shares, Global Depository Receipts, American Depository Receipts, foreign currency convertible bonds,



convertible debentures, warrants...or a combination thereof up to an aggregate amount of ₹15,000 crore by way a public issue, preferential allotment, private placement, qualified institutions placement..." This could be done in one or more tranches. The filing further mentioned, "issuance of unsecured and / or secured, non-convertible debentures up to an aggregate amount of ₹15,000 crore, by way of public offering or private placement basis or otherwise, in one or more tranches".

The proposals will be taken up at the company's annual general meeting scheduled September 30, 2020. It may be recalled that recent reports had suggested that Verizon and Amazon may invest over \$4 billion into the company, but Vodafone

Idea had on Thursday clarified that while it constantly evaluates various opportunities as part of corporate strategy, there is no such proposal currently before the Board at yet.

Fund infusion is critical for VIL, the third largest operator in the fiercely-competitive Indian telecom market, where Jio's entry in 2016 with free calls and cheap data pushed some rivals to exit, acquire, or merge to stay afloat.

Jio Platforms - the unit that houses India's youngest but largest telecom firm Jio and apps - recently raised ₹1,52,056 crore from thirteen investors, including Facebook, Google, General Atlantic, Intel Capital and Qualcomm Ventures.

'Worst behind us, economy witnessing V-shaped recovery'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 4: Days after India reported a 23.9% contraction in its gross domestic product (GDP), the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) in its Monthly Economic Review for August has said that the worst is over now as the Indian economy is going through a V-shaped recovery.

DEA cited the uptick in manufacturing purchasing managers' index, auto sales, e-way bills among others to show that the country is witnessing a recovery.

It noted that as countries unlocked in the quarter starting in July, recovery is underway globally. "India, too, is witnessing a sharp V-shaped recovery. India's

manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI), at 52.2, has moved into expansionary zone in August for the first time since the lockdown, presenting much required recovery prospects for the manufacturing sector," the 33-page report said.

It added that V-shaped pattern of recovery is seen in the high-frequency indicators including auto sales, tractor sales, fertiliser sales, railway freight traffic, steel consumption and production, cement production, power consumption, e-way bills, GST revenue collection, daily toll collections on highways, retail financial transactions, manufacturing PMI, performance of core industries, capital inflows and exports.



The DEA which comes under the MoF further said that on the back of robust FDI and FPI inflows and savings from tepid imports, forex reserves have risen to an all-time high of \$537.5 bn

TOWARDS NORMALCY

India's PMI, at 52.2, has moved into expansionary zone in August for the first time since lockdown

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The DEA which comes under the Ministry of Finance further said that on the back of robust FDI and FPI inflows and savings from tepid im-

ports, forex reserves as on August 21, have risen to an all-time high of \$537.5 billion. These are capable of financing more than 13 months of

imports, should the need arise from a surge in real sector activity, it added. The domestic space is flushed with high systemic liquidity, as per the department.

"A system flushed with liquidity is a system ready to absorb a surge in real sector activity which is reflected in the 10-year benchmark bond yields declining from 6.55% at end-April to 6.12% at end-August, and narrowing of spread in yields of 3-year AAA rated corporate bonds and equivalent government securities from 246 bps in end-April to 55 bps in end-August," it said.

With the MPC in its August meeting further keeping the policy rates unchanged, the systemic liquidity is well entrenched to supply credit

to the real sector.

The monthly report, however, noted that the world after Covid-19 will be different with structural changes in production, consumption and work patterns.

"As India emerges from this crisis, it will be critical to re-orient the country's policy matrix towards a calibrated reconstruction of the economy and building resilience for an uncertain future," it said.

As per the report, some areas that may require specific attention include agrarian supply chains, factor markets, infrastructure, ICT, start-ups, financial inclusion, skilling and health care. Progress in these areas will sustainably boost economic growth in years to come, it added.



Serena Williams sets up US Open face-off against Sloane Stephens as the 23-time Grand Slam winner sees off Gasparyan in the second round

ALL-AMERICAN SHOWDOWN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 4: Serena Williams won in straight sets again. She moved into an all-American showdown at the US Open against Sloane Stephens. Still, this victory did not quite go according to plan.

Her serve only so-so at times, her footwork a bit off, Williams got by and got through Thursday night against an opponent ranked just 117th, beating Margarita Gasparyan 6-2, 6-4 and letting out a cry of 'Yes!' at the end that reverberated in a nearly empty Arthur Ashe Stadium. It sounded more like relief than excitement.

"The only thing holding me back is that I get frustrated," said Williams, who has won six of her 23 Grand Slam singles titles at Flushing Meadows and was the runner-up the past two years.

"But I'm out here, I'm fighting. It was just a minor setback. If anything, it could help me know what not to do next time." That'll be Saturday against Stephens, the 2017 US Open champion.

It is their seventh match-up; Williams leads 5-1, including victories in the past four meetings in a row, but they last played at the 2015 French Open. Stephens' lone head-to-head victory came all the way back at the 2013 Australian Open.

This calibre of contest certainly doesn't feel as if it belongs in merely the third round at a Slam, but that's the luck of the draw this time. What will also be odd: the quiet.

All spectators were banned from Flushing Meadows this year because of the coronavirus pandemic. "I know if there were fans it would be so lit, and I'm kind of sad that we're not playing in front of fans, because it would be so fun," said the 26th-seeded Stephens, who advanced Thursday by defeating Olga Govortsova 6-2, 6-2.

"The atmosphere won't be as big, but obviously a big opportunity to play against the greatest player in the world. So, yeah, unfortunate but still fortunate."

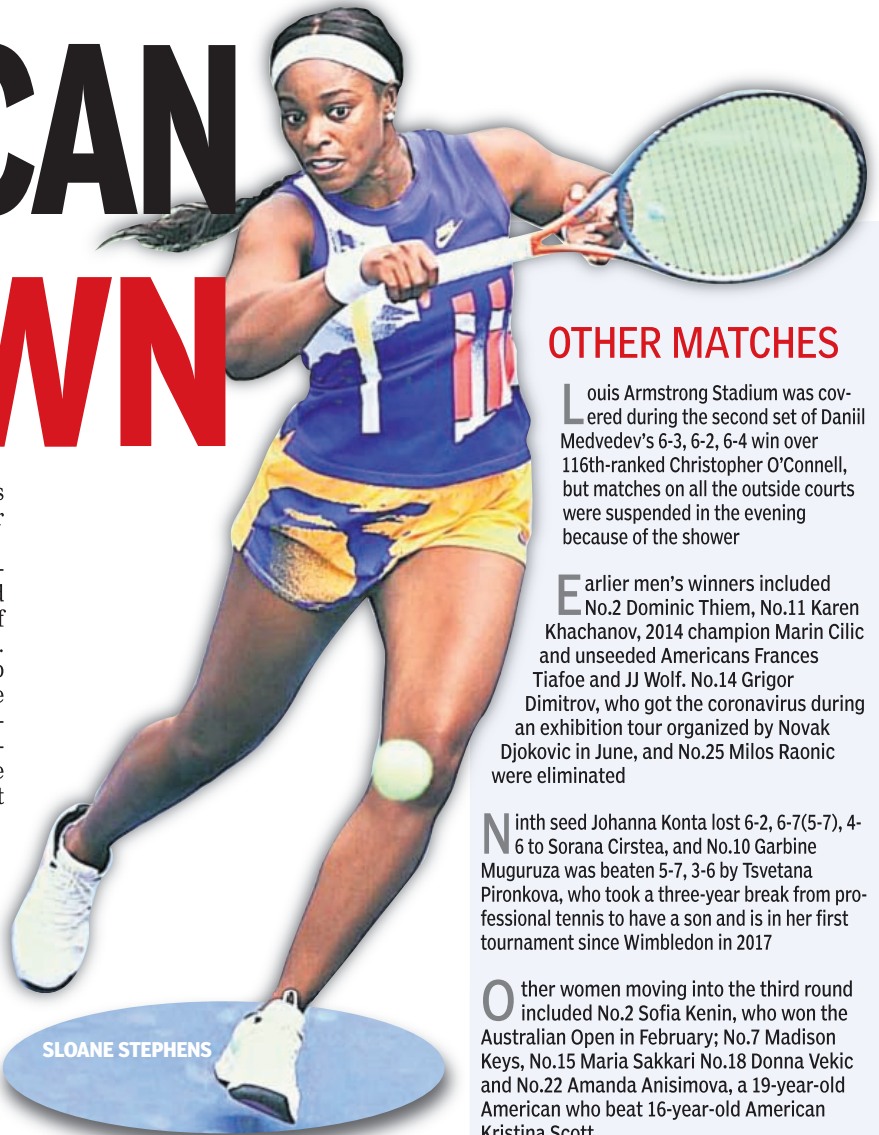
Both have compared the setting to their days as juniors, playing at age 10 or 12. Williams turns 39 this month and expended a lot of energy lately. Things weren't as easy as they might have been against Gasparyan, who hits flat with a one-handed backhand and whose only trip to the fourth

round at a major ended with a loss to Williams at the 2016 Australian Open. Williams served for the first set at 5-1 and got broken.

She went up 4-2 in the second set and got broken, dropped 8 of 10 points in one stretch and found herself at 4-all. In all, she put only 58 per cent of her first serves in and was broken three times.

Light rain began falling during the warm-up period, so Williams and Gasparyan sat on the sideline, each draping a towel over their shoulders, until Ashe could be turned into an indoor facility. The roof remained closed for the match that followed: Andy Murray against Felix Auger-Aliassime.

It will be their seventh match-up; Williams leads 5-1, including victories in the past four meetings in a row, but they last played at the 2015 French Open. Stephens' lone head-to-head victory came all the way back at the 2013 Australian Open



OTHER MATCHES

Louis Armstrong Stadium was covered during the second set of Daniil Medvedev's 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 win over 116th-ranked Christopher O'Connell, but matches on all the outside courts were suspended in the evening because of the shower

Earlier men's winners included No.2 Dominic Thiem, No.11 Karen Khachanov, 2014 champion Marin Cilic and unseeded Americans Frances Tiafoe and JJ Wolf. No.14 Grigor Dimitrov, who got the coronavirus during an exhibition tour organized by Novak Djokovic in June, and No.25 Milos Raonic were eliminated

Ninth seed Johanna Konta lost 6-2, 6-7(5-7), 4-6 to Sorana Cirstea, and No.10 Garbine Muguruza was beaten 5-7, 3-6 by Tsvetana Pironkova, who took a three-year break from professional tennis to have a son and is in her first tournament since Wimbledon in 2017

Other women moving into the third round included No.2 Sofia Kenin, who won the Australian Open in February; No.7 Madison Keys, No.15 Maria Sakkari No.18 Donna Vekic and No.22 Amanda Anisimova, a 19-year-old American who beat 16-year-old American Kristina Scott

Thiem music stops Nagal charge



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Sept 4: Sumit Nagal's trademark fighting spirit was on display throughout but it was not enough to get past World No.3 Dominic Thiem, who notched up a straight-set victory over the Indian in the US Open men's singles second round here.

Nagal lost 3-6, 3-6, 2-6 to the second-seeded Austrian, who celebrated his 27th birthday with a commanding performance at the Arthur Ashe stadium Thursday.

Thiem, this year's Australian Open finalist, had said that he has seen videos of Nagal's game and knew that he has a ripping forehand. Well prepared, he came out with a clear strategy of not giving many balls on the forehand side of the Indian.

"Thank you 2020 US Open. Lots to learn. Going to keep working hard! Thanks for all the support everyone," Nagal later tweeted.

Nagal came into the contest after giving India a rare singles main draw match win at a Grand Slam but it was always

going to be a daunting task for him to challenge someone who has made two French Open finals.

Slow off the blocks, Nagal was broken early but the slogger that he is, he kept Thiem under pressure, creating as many as five chances to break back in the fifth game that lasted 10 minutes.

Thiem wrapped up the match with ease even as Nagal kept finding winners here and there.

He fought hard and saved a match point too, but it was clear that the young Indian's best was not enough to trouble the top guns.



Harbhajan pulls out of IPL citing personal reason

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 4: Senior off-spinner Harbhajan Singh Friday became the second high-profile name to pull out of this year's IPL owing to 'personal reasons', saying he has informed the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) team management about his decision.

The 40-year-old, who has been a part of CSK during the past two seasons is currently in Jalandhar, Punjab with his family and requested privacy. The IPL starts September 19 in the UAE after being moved out of India due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I have informed the CSK management about my decision to pull out of this year's IPL. I have decided to take a break due to personal reasons in these difficult times. I expect that everyone would respect my need for privacy," Harbhajan, who was bought by the franchise for Rs 2 crore this season, told this agency Friday.

Earlier, all-rounder Suresh Raina, who too turned up for CSK, had opted out also citing personal reasons. Harbhajan said that he was indebted to the CSK management for understanding his priorities.

"When I told the CSK management about my decision, they were very supportive and I can't thank them enough for that," Harbhajan said. Once Harbhajan officially announced his pullout, CSK issued a statement, backing the player

"Harbhajan Singh informed us he won't be available due to personal reasons. Team CSK is supportive of his decision and stands by him and his family during these testing times," CSK tweeted CEO K S Viswanathan's statement.

It's not clear if CSK will opt for a finger spinner as replacement or would seek a batsman as they have depth and quality in bowling.

NEWS IN BRIEF

PSG's COVID +ve tally rises to six

Paris: Three more Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) players tested positive for the coronavirus, taking the number so far to six and throwing the club's start to the new season into chaos. PSG announced the positive tests late Thursday, without giving the names of the players and only saying that they are 'subject to the appropriate health protocol'. But sports daily 'L'Equipe' named them as defender Marquinhos, goalkeeper Keylor Navas and striker Mauro Icardi. The other three cases, confirmed by the club Wednesday, reportedly are forward Neymar, winger Angel Di Maria and midfielder Leandro Paredes. All six were part of a recent holiday trip to Ibiza in Spain, which was authorized, following the club's defeat to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final August 23.

Atletico stars test positive

Madrid: Atletico Madrid striker Diego Costa and defender Santiago Arias have tested positive for the coronavirus, the Spanish club said. The players are in quarantine and will not report for the team's first day of training Friday. Most of the squad underwent their tests on Thursday, but Costa and Arias had tested positive while on vacation, the club said. They were not showing symptoms of COVID-19. Atletico Madrid will begin their season at the end of the month against Granada in the Spanish league. Their first two league matches were postponed because their season ended later as they participated in the Champions League quarterfinals.

Messi's father slams La Liga over the player's release clause dispute

Barcelona: The saga surrounding Lionel Messi and Barcelona has taken a new twist in the shape of Jorge Messi issuing a statement addressed to La Liga president Javier Tebas. The statement reiterates his camp's belief that Messi's 700 million euro buyout clause is no longer valid if the player decided to leave after the 2019-20 season. Jorge's statement appears to quote directly from his contract, stating: "The release clause will not apply when the unilateral resolution of the contract comes into effect after the end of the 2019-20 season." He says La Liga made a 'clear error' and adds that he's not exactly sure what contract they were looking at previously. La Liga had announced five days ago that they believe Messi is still under contract and the clause is still valid.

Vaccine not a requirement: Muto

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, Sept 4: A vaccine is not a requirement for holding next year's postponed Olympics and Paralympics, the CEO of the Tokyo Games Toshiro Muto said Friday.

Muto was speaking after a task force meeting with government officials, disease experts and Japanese Olympic officials. It's the first of several high-level meetings dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic as Tokyo tries to figure out if it can hold the games.

"It's not a prerequisite," Muto said of the vaccine. "The International Olympic Committee and the WHO already discussed this matter. It's not a condition for the delivery of the Tokyo 2020 Games."

"A vaccine is not a requirement. Of course, if vaccines are developed we'll really appreciate it. And for Tokyo 2020 this will be great. But



if you ask me if that's a condition — it's not a condition."

The task force meetings over the next several months will deal with issue like getting athletes into Japan,

COVID-19 testing, measures to keep venues safe, anti-virus measures at the Athletes' Village, immigration issues and the status of fans.

A statement outlining the schedule of five meetings said an 'interim summary is planned by approximately the end of 2020'. "As far as spectators, we don't have any conditions yet, but we'd like to avoid no spectators," Muto said.

Japan is facing a major challenge, with the public skeptical the Olympics can take place — or should take place. Japan has already invested billions, and the delay is likely to cost billions more.

A poll last month of almost 13,000 Japanese companies showed 53.6% want the games canceled or postponed again. The IOC has said if the Olympics can't happen in 2021, they will be canceled. A poll in July found that two-thirds of the public also favors another postponement or cancellation.

Enrique's men grab late winner to salvage draw against Germany as international football returns

Gaya saves Spain the blushes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stuttgart, Sept 4: Spain defender Jose Gaya scored deep into stoppage time to salvage a 1-1 draw against Germany as the UEFA Nations League started without fans ending a 10-month international break.

The Valencia defender scored in the sixth minute of injury to time to cancel out Timo Werner's opening goal on his return to his hometown Stuttgart.

With international football returning for the first time since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, all 54 games that are scheduled to take place across the continent over six days are taking place with strict hygiene measures, including the exclusion of fans. Players had to pass mandatory pregame tests for COVID-19.

Werner, who was born here and went on to become the club's youngest scorer, gave Germany the lead in the 51st minute.

He finished off a move started by a cross-field ball from Ilkay Gundogan, with debutant Robin Gosens providing the cross.

Barcelona winger Ansu Fati came on for the second half to become Spain's youngest debutant since Angel Zubietta in 1936. The 17-year-old had an injury-time equaliser ruled out for a foul by Sergio Ramos in the build-up.

But there was still time for Rodrigo Moreno to set up Gaya for the equaliser, with the defender converting from close range.

It was Spain's first game with coach Luis Enrique back in charge following the death of his nine-year-old daughter Xana due to a type of bone cancer in August 2019. Enrique had stepped down for five months before returning in November, when he couldn't



TRUE SAVIOUR: Jose Gaya (No.14) is surrounded by his teammates after scoring Spain's equaliser against Germany, Thursday

Barca winger Ansu Fati came on for the second half to become Spain's youngest debutant since Angel Zubietta in 1936

have foreseen such a long wait for his next game.

Germany coach Joachim Loew refrained from calling up most of his Bayern Munich contingent after they played in the Champions League final August 23. Defender Niklas Sule was the exception as he only recently returned from injury.

Gosens started on the left to make his Germany debut after an un-

usual route to the senior side. The 26-year-old played in the Netherlands before joining Atalanta in Italy and never played for any of Germany's youth sides.

Also in the same League A group, Ukraine defeated Switzerland 2-1. Ireland captain Shane Duffy scored in injury time for a 1-1 draw at Bulgaria, while Wales beat Finland 1-0 in League B's Group 4.

Russia defeated Serbia 3-1 and Hungary beat Turkey 1-0 away in their group. In League C, Moldova drew with Kosovo 1-1, and Slovenia and Greece played out a 0-0 draw. The Faeroe Islands earned a 3-2 win over fellow minnow Malta in League D, where Latvia drew 0-0 against Andorra.